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ABSTRACT

According to the education and training requirements of the Family Support Act of 1988, the Connecticut Department of Income Maintenance (DIM) is required to approve criteria or standards for determining the satisfactory progress of Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC)/Job Connection clients enrolled in education and skill training programs. This report recommends draft standards for determining clients' satisfactory progress in basic skills, classes in English as a Second Language, high school completion, higher education, and skill training programs; and it provides guidelines for selecting high quality programs. Following a brief introductory chapter, chapter 2 describes current practices in determining satisfactory progress. Chapter 3 proposes the standards and also provides guidelines for selecting quality programs, including how to determine the probationary period during which clients who have not met the standards may be given another opportunity and how to determine whether mitigating circumstances were responsible for a client failing to meet the standards. Chapter 4 addresses factors that affect implementation of the standards (interagency cooperation, staff training, and provision of information about service providers to whom case managers refer clients). Appendices contain the questionnaire used to survey Connecticut's DIM staff prior to the preparation of this report and a list of companies, institutions, and agencies that provider services to Job Connection clients. (CML)

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Criteria for Determining the Satisfactory Progress of Job Connection Clients: Final Report

Judith A. Alamprese
with
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October 1992

Prepared for the Connecticut Department of Income Maintenance

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PREFACE

The Family Support Act of 1988 calls for State IV-A agencies to approve standards for determining the satisfactory performance of Aid to Families with Dependent Children clients in education and skill training programs. In response to this requirement, the Connecticut Department of Income Maintenance (DIM)/Job Connection, through an interagency agreement with the Connecticut Department of Education, commissioned COSMOS Corporation to conduct a project to develop draft standards for determining Job Connection clients' satisfactory progress in basic skills, English as a second language, high school completion, higher education, and skill training programs. In addition to developing draft standards, COSMOS was to specify draft guidelines for determining the quality of education and skill training programs that provide services in these areas.

This document is the final report for this project. Described in the report are the results of a review of existing information and the collection of new data concerning current practices undertaken by DIM district Job Connection staff to determine clients' satisfactory progress and select quality programs. Included in this discussion is information concerning other states' procedures for assessing clients' progress in education programs. Also presented in the report are options and recommendations for draft standards for determining satisfactory progress and guidelines for selecting quality programs, as well as issues that need to be considered in implementing these standards.

This report is submitted to the Connecticut Department of Income Maintenance and the Connecticut Department of Education, Bureau of Adult Education and Training. The project was funded through an interagency agreement between the Connecticut Department of Income Maintenance and the Connecticut Department of Education, under a Purchase Order from the Capitol Region Education Council to COSMOS Corporation. The COSMOS Corporation staff who conducted this project were: Judith A. Alamprese, the project's director and author of this report; Julie Beaver, a research assistant who participated in data collection and analysis activities and prepared the tables included in the report; and Michael Caruso and Timothy Duggan, research assistants who participated in the project's data collection and analysis activities.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction to the Project

According to the education and training requirements of the Family Support Act of 1988, the Connecticut Department of Income Maintenance (DIM) is required to approve criteria or standards for determining the satisfactory progress of Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC)/Job Connection clients enrolled in education and skill training programs. The legislation states that these standards of progress must be measured on the basis of less than a year, include a qualitative measure of the participant's progress (such as a grade point average), and include a quantitative measure of the participant's progress (such as a time limit for the completion of the program or course of study). The standards also may include consideration for a probationary period and provision for mitigating circumstances.

State welfare agencies were given a three-year period in which to develop and implement the standards. As an initial step in developing standards, the DIM Job Connection staff have used the standards of progress that were developed by service providers and those that were negotiated with DIM-funded service providers. This experience has provided the background information for DIM to use in specifying final standards for determining Job Connection clients' satisfactory progress in education and skill training programs.

Since January 1990, the Job Connection staff in DIM have worked with the Connecticut Department of Education staff and others to collect information about the types of practices undertaken by education and skill training providers to assess clients' progress in programs as a step in determining standards of progress. Issues regarding the types of reasonable standards that can be set for determining progress and methods for transferring information between education and skill training providers and DIM district Job Connection staff have been the subjects of discussion in State and local program meetings. In addition, initiatives such as the Connecticut Adult Performance Program (CAPP), PROJECT LIFE (Learning Incentives for Employment), and CETO have provided information and resources regarding client assessment and interagency transfer of client data.

An array of information concerning Job Connection participants' satisfactory progress in education and skill training programs has emerged from the numerous State and local discussions and from the experiences of the implementation of the varied initiatives. Because of the breadth of information, the DIM Job Connection administrative staff thought that it would be beneficial to have an independent consultant review this information and prepare draft standards of satisfactory progress. DIM, through an interagency agreement with the Connecticut Department of Education, commissioned COSMOS Corporation to carry out a project during the period January-July 1992. This report presents the findings from the project, which had the following objectives:

- Review existing information concerning the development of standards for satisfactory progress;
- Collect information from DIM district case managers concerning their procedures for determining satisfactory progress, their methods for collecting this information from service providers, and their methods for determining quality programs;
- Collect information from a small sample of States regarding their policies for determining satisfactory progress as specified in the Family Support Act of 1988;
- Develop draft standards for determining satisfactory progress in basic skills, English as a second language (ESL), high school completion, higher education, and skill training programs;
- Develop draft guidelines for determining quality programs; and
- Identify issues that should be considered in the implementation of standards, particularly in terms of the types of staff training that might be provided.

Data Collection Methods and Data Sources

A variety of existing sources of information was reviewed and new data were collected to understand the practices that district Job Connection staff currently use to determine the extent to which clients' progress in programs is satisfactory and to select quality programs. The following information sources were examined as part of the project's activities:

- Notes from Regional Interagency Steering Committee (RISC) meetings held during 1990-1991;
- Reports written about PROJECT LIFE;
- Memoranda issued by Job Connection and Department of Education staff;
- Policy documents issued by DIM and other State and local welfare agencies;
- Sample data collection forms submitted by local Job Connection and local adult education program staff; and
- Data concerning CAPP assessments results during 1987-1990.

In addition to analyzing existing information, the project's staff collected new information through the following four methods: 1) the conduct of three focus groups with local Job Connection and adult education staff, and representatives from higher education and skill training agencies; 2) the conduct of a meeting with the project's State Advisory Committee; 3) the conduct of a mail survey of Job Connection case managers in the six DIM districts, which had a response rate of 52 percent; and 4) the conduct of telephone interviews with representatives from four State welfare agency Job Opportunities and Basic Skills (JOBS) staff.

Findings Regarding Current Practices in Determining Clients' Satisfactory Progress

As background to preparing draft standards of satisfactory progress and guidelines for selecting quality programs, the project staff identified the types of information that

Job Connection staff currently collect about clients' progress, the criteria they use to determine whether the progress is satisfactory, the methods they use to obtain this information from education and skill training service providers, and the factors that have facilitated and inhibited the transfer of information between local agencies. Also identified were the criteria that Job Connection staff use to determine the quality of service providers to whom they refer clients and the barriers that these staff have encountered in obtaining information to make these judgements. In addition to these data, the project staff collected information from five State welfare agencies concerning their policies for determining satisfactory progress in education programs.

Types of information. The results of the survey of Job Connection case managers revealed that they use the following categories of information to determine the satisfactory progress of their Job Connection clients:

- Measures of skill gain;
- Other education measures, such as grade or grade point average , teachers' written and oral assessments, and program certificate;
- Attendance;
- Job skill attainment progress; and
- Measures of clients' behavior and attitude.

The most frequently-used measure of skill gain reported by case managers is pass rate on the General Educational Development (GED), followed by CAPP score. Few survey respondents use information from the Test of Adult Basic Education (13 percent) or the Adult Basic Learning Examination (16 percent). In addition to skill measures, case managers consider other types of educational data in determining clients' progress. All survey respondents reported using a grade or grade point average (G.P.A.) and most (89 percent) said that a program certificate is evidence of progress. In terms of teachers' professional judgement, the majority of case managers (80 percent) indicated that they collect teachers' written assessment of clients, while 60 percent noted that they rely on

teachers' verbal assessment. Another category of information that all survey respondents reported using as an indicator of client progress was attendance.

In addition to collecting data about education measures and attendance, approximately one third of the case managers also obtain information concerning clients' progress in skill training programs. The final type of information gathered by case managers concerns clients' change in behavior and attitude in either education or job training programs. Approximately half of the survey respondents indicated that they consider change in a client's attitude as one indicator of progress, while one third noted that they accept data concerning clients' change in behavior.

Criteria for Determining Progress. In addition to collecting data in the survey of case managers about the types of information that case managers use to determine clients' progress, the project staff also examined the criteria that case managers use to determine if clients' progress is satisfactory. Case managers generally consider an increase in test score, class grade, or grade point average as an indicator of progress. While an increase in score or grade is the criterion used by case managers, there is little data available about the amount of increase that is considered by case managers to be satisfactory. The information that is available indicates that there is great variation in the score levels, grades, and attendance rates used by service providers to determine client progress. This variation reflects the current practice in DIM districts of having local service providers set their own standards for satisfactory progress.

For measures other than tests or grades, case managers have used the attainment of a certificate or the completion of a program's requirements as indicators of progress. Case managers also look to the institution or service provider to set a standard and asses their clients using this information. There is also variation in the criterion used by case managers regarding attendance. While the Family Support Act's regulations specify that JOBS participants must have an average of 75 percent attendance during a month's time, case managers report using rates from 70 to 80 percent in making their assessment.

In measuring clients' progress in skill training programs, case managers generally consider the receipt of a certificate or movement to the next level of training as evidence. They also rely on service providers to specify a standard for assessing client progress.

The final area examined in the survey of case managers was the measurement of change in clients' behavior and attitude. Case managers rely on their own observations and those of service providers in making these assessments, rather than the collection of formal data through instruments or other systematic processes. Examples of the types of behavioral change that case managers consider are clients' ability to plan and to initiate contact with service providers. In the area of attitudinal change, case managers frequently use the criterion of clients' demonstration of a positive attitude toward their training program.

The majority of case managers who responded to the survey use multiple measures to assess their clients' progress. Almost half reported using at least three measures of skill gain, and 56 percent indicated that they use four "other education measures." This information about the amount of data that case managers use in making their judgements about clients is a factor in determining whether standards of satisfactory progress should include a variety of measures from which case managers can choose.

Interagency Exchange of Information. The information collected from the survey of case managers, focus group meetings, and the review of RISC meeting reports indicates that Job Connection case managers and staff from service provider agencies are working together in a variety of ways to transfer client information across agencies. These methods include the use of referral forms that contain information about a client's demographic characteristics, educational and work history, and performance on appraisal instruments, and the use of forms that contain data on clients' attendance and progress in basic skills, ESL, secondary education, or skill training programs. In addition to the transfer of information in written form, case managers and service provider staff have established methods of communicating about clients through telephone discussions and meetings. These methods are particularly effective when a case manager has a question about the progress of a client and is able to discuss the issue with the service provider.

Case managers generally rely on service providers to gather and transfer information about a client, but also receive information from clients about their progress. This practice is necessary in higher education programs, where attendance is not kept in a central office and the client is relied upon to provide the information to the case manager.

While case managers have been creative in working with staff from education and skill training agencies in sharing information, they also have experienced some barriers in gathering data they need in an appropriate form and timeframe. Of particular concern have been case managers' difficulties in interpreting information about clients' performance on basic skills measures, and the frequency with which attendance information is transferred between agencies. Also problematic has been the unavailability of information from skill training agencies regarding clients' progress.

One factor that has facilitated communication between case managers and other agency staff is their personal relationships. The commitment of staff to work together to assist clients has mediated some of the structural difficulties staff have encountered in collecting the required information.

Criteria for Determining Quality Programs. In the survey of case managers, respondents identified the following four factors as being the most important in their selection of service providers: 1) type of skill training offered; 2) relationship between the skill training offered and the job market; 3) geographical location of the service provider; and 4) agency's rate of job placement. Also rated highly were case managers' personal experience with the service provider and the cost of the program. Survey respondents also identified the types of information that they would like to have available but have not been able to access. These responses included data about agencies' job placement rates and information about program services and requirements.

States' Criteria for Determining Satisfactory Progress. Part of the data collection for this project involved gathering information about standards for satisfactory progress from other States. Five States that were early implementers of the Federal JOBS Program--California, Michigan, New Jersey, Massachusetts, and Pennsylvania--were selected for study. All of the States except for Pennsylvania provided specific information about determining clients' progress in programs. Pennsylvania's policy document addressed criteria for placing clients in programs, but did not specify the measures of progress. California has the most clearly delineated standards, with the required scale scores on the Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System (CASAS) Survey Achievement being stated. Michigan uses competency tests that are administered by local providers

and relies on these providers to set the standard. New Jersey does not specify the type of measure that should be used, but relies on individual service providers to judge clients' progress. Finally, Massachusetts specifies the instrument and level for clients in ESL programs, and relies on local providers' use of competency tests for assessing clients' progress.

Proposed Standards for Determining Clients' Satisfactory Progress and Guidelines for Selecting Quality Programs

Framework for Standards and Guidelines. The regulations for the Family Support Act of 1988 specify broad criteria for developing standards of progress, which were used by the project team as one guideline in preparing the draft standards. The team also identified three other factors that should be considered in setting standards of satisfactory progress and quality program guidelines. These were: 1) the extent to which the standards and guidelines are reasonable and fair--i.e., are based on empirical data or other information about clients' capacities to perform in a specific timeframe; 2) the feasibility of the standards and guidelines,--i.e., the extent to which information needed to implement a standard is available and accessible to Job Connection case managers; and 3) the extent to which the standards and guidelines are flexible so that they can be modified to meet the special situations or needs of clients.

Draft Standards for Satisfactory Performance. The types of information that Job Connection case managers use to judge their clients' progress in education and skill training programs were one source of data examined in developing standards. Also considered was the prior work undertaken by the Connecticut Department of Education in recommending approaches to developing standards of satisfactory progress, and adult education participants' past performance on the CAPP test.

The following draft qualitative and quantitative standards are proposed for determining Job Connection clients' progress in education programs. There must be qualitative evidence of clients' progress in basic skills, ESL, academic, or high school completion programs as indicated by the standards that are listed below. There also must be quantitative evidence of clients' progress in education programs as indicated by the amount of time allotted to complete the course of study or program.

- Basic Skills/ESL Programs. Clients' progress in basic skills or ESL programs must be assessed after 75 hours of instruction, provided that this amount of instruction occurs over a period of at least three months, or by the end of each semester (not to exceed four months) that a client is enrolled in a program. This information can be one of the following:

  a. Progress in acquiring basic skills or English language skills as indicated by gain scores on a standardized instrument. The following are the minimal level of gains that clients are expected to achieve:

     - CAPP Survey Achievement Test or Employability Competency System (ECS) Test: a scale score gain of at least 3 points in reading or listening; or

     - TABE: a gain of at least 1 grade level (for programs not required to use CAPP); or

     - ABLE: a gain of at least 1 grade level (for programs not required to use CAPP).

     OR

  b. Progress in acquiring basic skills or English language skills as indicated by clients' mastery of a percent of competencies specified for the course. A list of the competencies, the percent that is required to be demonstrated (as indicated by the service provider), and the specific evidence of a client's demonstration of the competencies must be provided.

- High School Completion Programs. Clients' progress in a GED program, the External Diploma Program (EDP), or the Credit Diploma Program must be assessed at least by the end of each semester a client is enrolled in one of these programs. The standards for progress for these programs are as follows:

a. GED: The attainment of the GED certificate or an increase of at least points on one of the GED practice tests over the period of a semester; or

b. External Diploma Program: For clients in the Generalized Assessment component of the EDP: the completion of at least two tasks with the demonstration of at least 50 percent of the competencies in each task; or for clients in Diagnosis: the movement from Diagnosis into Generalized Assessment as determined by the EDP; or for clients in the Individualized Assessment component of the EDP: the demonstration of the competencies required by the Individualized Assessment component of the EDP or the attainment of the high school diploma. This progress must occur over the period of a semester; or

c. Credit Diploma Program: The attainment of progress over a semester as determined by the program's coordinator. For example, this may include the completion of a number of courses with a grade or C or higher, the attainment of credit for experiential learning or participation in community services, or the completion of other program requirements.

- Higher Education Programs. Clients' progress in a higher education program must be assessed at least by the end of each semester a client is enrolled. A client is expected to achieve the standard that is set by the institution in which he/she is enrolled for maintaining good academic standing.

In addition to the qualitative and quantitative standards described above, the Family Support Act requires that information about JOBS clients' attendance be reported to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. This information is reported about a sample of clients' average attendance over a period of a month. In order for this information to be available to the Job Connection office, district DIM offices will need to collect information about clients' attendance in education programs on a monthly

basis. The proposed attendance standard is that clients must attend 75 percent of the classes over a month's period and may have no more than 3 unexcused absences in a semester.

Another source of information that can be used to supplement the standards for education programs presented above is the professional judgement of service providers. Two types of judgements are possible: 1) judgements concerning clients' attitudes, such as service providers' assessment of clients' demonstration of a positive attitude or their understanding of the requirements for successful completion of the program; and 2) judgements concerning clients' behavior in class, such as service providers' assessment of the extent to which a client participates in class, works with other students, or demonstrates the ability to undertake long-range planning. It is proposed that standard forms be developed for service providers to use in documenting professional judgement and that this information be collected from service providers when a client's progress in a program is questionable or additional information is needed by the case manager to make a determination of the client's status.

The following draft standards are proposed for determining Job Connection clients' progress in skill training programs, including classroom-based and on-the-job training programs. The standard for attendance described for education programs also applies to skill training programs. The standards for skill training programs are as follows:

- Classroom-Based Programs. Clients' progress in classroom-based skill training programs must be assessed at least by the end of each semester (not to exceed four months) that a client is enrolled in a program. Either entire programs or components (sometimes referred to as units) of a program may be used as the standard for instruction. Documentation of progress in a program or a component of a program can be one of the following:

  a. Progress as documented by a grade of C or higher for a course or a grade point average of C or higher. If a grade point average is used as the measure of a client's progress, the client may earn a D in a course as long as the grade point average is C or higher; or

b. Progress as indicated by clients' increase in score as measured by an instrument appropriate for the skill being taught. The score gain that would be adequate given the type of instrument that is being used must be designated; or

c. Progress as indicated by clients' mastery of a percent of competencies specified for the course. A list of the competencies, the percent that is required to be demonstrated (as determined by the service provider), and the specific evidence of a client's demonstration of the competencies must be provided.

- On-the-Job Training Programs. Clients' progress in on-the-job training programs must be assessed at least by the end of each semester a client is participating in the program. The documentation may include a rating of the clients' attitude toward the work, behavior in carrying out job responsibilities, and other information about specific skills required for the job for which the client is being trained. A rating scale such as that proposed in the previous discussion concerning Professional Judgement could be used by service providers, along with a narrative statement of a client's progress.

The following guidelines are proposed for the selection of quality service providers for skill training programs.

- Non-profit, vocational technical schools and private occupational schools must be approved by the Connecticut Department of Education;

- Service providers offering adult education classes must provide documentation that Job Connection clients enrolled in their adult education programs are making satisfactory progress as defined by DIM;

- A service provider must have secured employment for a minimum of 70 percent of Job Connection enrollees within 6 months of their training completion date during 1991-1992. This rate would increase or decrease with a change in the economic condition of the State;

- A service provider whose students receive Federally-sponsored student loans must have a default rate of less than 20 percent (or a rate determined by the Connecticut Department of Education); and

- A service provider that is an institution of higher education must be approved by the State agency overseeing higher education programs.

Determination of Probationary and Mitigating Circumstances. The Family Support Act includes considerations for a probationary period and provisions for mitigating circumstances in applying standards for determining clients' progress in education and skill training programs. The recommendation for a probationary period is as follows: if a client does not meet the standard for progress specified for an education or skill training program, he/she may be placed on probation for a period of time to allow him/her the opportunity to meet the required standard of progress. It is also proposed that an institution's regulations regarding the placement of students on probation be used as the first source of information for determining a client's period of probation. If a program, agency, or institution does not have a stated probation policy, then it is proposed that a client be allowed to have a probationary period of one semester (not to exceed four months) to meet the required standard.

There are several mitigating circumstances that may interfere with a client's ability to progress satisfactorily in a program or course of study. These include the following: a) clients' learning disabilities and learning difficulties, b) sickness, c) family emergencies, and d) homelessness. Case managers should gather information from the client and/or service provider about the type of circumstance and make a determination about the validity and severity of the difficulty. Once this determination is made, the case manager could extend the period of time in which the client is expected to meet the standard for satisfactory progress. The recommended period of time is a semester (not to exceed four months).

Implementation of Standards for Satisfactory Progress

The success of the implementation of the standards for determining Job Connection clients' satisfactory progress in education and skill training programs and the guidelines for selecting quality programs will depend on three main factors:

- The extent to which State agencies (i.e., the Departments of Income Maintenance, Education, Labor, and High Education) can work cooperatively in disseminating information to service providers about the standards and in encouraging service providers to work with case managers in transferring information about Job Connection clients. It is recommended that the State agencies undertake the following:

  a. Disseminate information to service providers in each system about the standards and the importance of working with local Job Connection staff in providing client information and assistance; and

  b. Convene quarterly meetings with representatives from the State agencies during the first year of the implementation of the standards to identify barriers to implementation and propose solutions to these barriers.

- The extent to which Job Connection local staff are trained and provided with support (i.e., standardized forms) to implement the standards and guidelines. It is recommended that case managers receive training in the following: 1) how to interpret the standards, 2) methods for collecting information about client progress and mitigating circumstances from service providers and clients, 3) procedures for making decisions about client progress, and 4) procedures for collecting and interpreting information about the quality of service providers; and

- The amount and quality of information that is available about programs and economic conditions that can be used by case managers in selecting service providers. It is recommended that DIM work with other State agencies in identifying sources of information about service providers and local economic conditions that could be disseminated to case managers on a periodic basis.

Appendix

A. Letter To DIM District Directors A-1
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I. INTRODUCTION

The Federal Mandate

As part of the education and training requirements specified in the Family Support Act of 1988, the Connecticut Department of Income Maintenance (DIM) is required to approve criteria or standards for determining the satisfactory progress of Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC)/Job Connection clients enrolled in education and skill training programs. According to the legislation, these standards of progress must be:

- Based upon a consistent written policy;
- Measured on the basis of less than a year (such as a term or quarter);
- Include a qualitative measure of the participant's progress (such as a grade point average);
- Include a quantitative measure of the participant's progress (such as a time limit for the completion of the program or course of study);
- Developed by the educational institution or program in which the participant was enrolled;
- Approved by the State or local educational agency; and
- Approved by the State welfare agency.

The standards also may include consideration for a probationary period and provision for mitigating circumstances (Federal Register, 1989).

The Job Connection staff in DIM have responsibility for approving and implementing these standards. As specified in the Federal legislation, State welfare agency staff--such as the Job Connection staff--should undertake the following:

- Require 18 or 19-year old custodial parents to accept a job or training if they fail to make good progress in educational activities;
- Make a participant's enrollment in a training or postsecondary activity contingent upon satisfactory progress;
- Use the definition of progress to determine if a participant has been appropriately placed in an educational or training activity; and
- Use the definition of progress to determine whether to continue to provide Job Connection special benefits to those enrolled in education and training (Talmadge, 1990).

Because of the complexity of the task of specifying standards of progress and the potential consequences for a participant who does not meet the standards, State welfare agencies were given a three-year period in which to develop and implement the standards. During this period, DIM has used the standards of progress that have been developed by service providers and those that have been negotiated with DIM-funded service providers. This experience provided the background information for DIM to use in specifying standards for determining Job Connection clients' satisfactory progress in education and skill training programs.

Activities in Support of the Mandate

Since January 1990, the Job Connection staff in DIM have worked with the Connecticut Department of Education staff and others to examine the types of practices undertaken by education and skill training providers to assess clients' progress in programs. Issues regarding the types of reasonable standards that can be set for determining progress and methods for transferring information between education and skill training providers and DIM district Job Connection staff have been discussed in numerous meetings involving DIM and Department of Education staff. These issues also have been the subjects of discussions among staff in local programs as they attempt to meet the requirements of the Federal legislation.

During this period, a number of State initiatives has been carried out that address the issues of client assessment and collection and interagency transfer of data. For example, the implementation of the Connecticut Adult Performance Program (CAPP) has provided adult education programs funded by the Department of Education with assessment instruments and procedures for placing clients in instructional programs and for measuring their progress. These data have been used by local Job Connection staff in assessing the extent to which clients are achieving their educational goals.

One contribution from PROJECT LIFE (Learning Incentives for Employment) was the development of a client referral form that could be used by local education, income maintenance, and job training agencies. The goal was to have a form that would facilitate clients' participation in services offered by these agencies. While the form never became part of a mandated data collection process, it did serve as an example for current efforts in refining the CAPP data collection system.

Another initiative that has contributed to the development of client assessment and information exchange processes has been the CETO collaborative. This initiative has provided opportunities for local DIM district staff to work with occupational training, adult education, and higher education staff in serving Job Connection clients. These staff have experimented with written and oral methods for transferring information that are needed to determine clients' status in programs.

A rich array of information concerning Job Connection participants' satisfactory progress in education and skill training programs has emerged from State-level staff discussions and the activities of the varied initiatives. Because of the breath and numerous sources of information, the DIM Job Connection administrative staff thought that it would be beneficial to have an independent consultant review this information and prepare draft standards of satisfactory progress. Therefore, DIM sought the assistance of COSMOS Corporation to undertake this task.

COSMOS's Project

The Department of Income Maintenance, through an interagency agreement with the Connecticut Department of Education, commissioned COSMOS Corporation to carry out a project during the period January-July 1992, which had the following objectives:

- Review existing information concerning the development of standards for satisfactory progress;
- Collect information from DIM district case managers concerning their procedures for determining satisfactory progress, their methods for collecting this information from service providers, and their methods for determining quality programs;
- Collect information from a small sample of States regarding their policies for determining satisfactory progress as specified in the Family Support Act of 1988;
- Develop draft standards for determining satisfactory progress in basic skills, English as a second language (ESL), high school completion, higher education, and skill training programs;
- Develop draft guidelines for determining quality programs; and
- Identify issues that should be considered in the implementation of standards, particularly in terms of the types of staff training that might be provided.

This document is the final report for the project and presents its findings. Described in Section II are the results of the review of existing information and the collection of new data concerning current practices undertaken by DIM district Job Connection staff in determining clients' satisfactory progress and selecting quality programs. Also discussed in this section is the information that was collected from five States regarding their policies for determining satisfactory progress. Described in Section III are options and recommendations for draft standards for determining satisfactory progress and guidelines for selecting quality programs. Finally, Section IV presents issues that should be considered in determining the final standards and their implementation procedures, particularly in terms of the need for staff training.

II. CURRENT PRACTICES IN DETERMINING SATISFACTORY PROGRESS

Introduction

This section of the report presents the findings from the collection of new and review of existing information concerning DIM district Job Connection staff's practices in determining the satisfactory performance of Job Connection clients in basic skills, English as a second language, high school completion, higher education, and skill training programs. Addressed are the types of information collected by Job Connection staff, the methods they use to obtain this information from education and skill training service providers, and the factors that have facilitated and inhibited the transfer of information between local agencies. Also discussed are the criteria used by Job Connection staff to determine the quality of service providers to whom they refer clients and the barriers they have encountered in obtaining information to make these judgements.

In addition to the information about Job Connection staffs' collection of satisfactory progress information, this section presents data that were collected from five State welfare agencies concerning their policies for determining satisfactory progress in education programs. Included in this discussion are the criteria for standards that have been discussed by State Job Connection and Department of Education staff in their meetings during the past two years.

Data Sources

A variety of existing sources of information was reviewed and new data were collected to obtain an understanding of the practices that currently are being used by local Job Connection staff to determine the extent to which clients' progress in programs is satisfactory and to select quality programs. The following information sources were examined as part of the project's activities:

- Notes from Regional Interagency Steering Committee (RISC) meetings held during 1990-1991;

- Reports written about PROJECT LIFE;
- Memoranda issued by Job Connection and Department of Education staff;
- Policy documents issued by DIM and other State and local welfare agencies;
- Sample data collection forms submitted by local Job Connection and local adult education program staff; and
- Data concerning CAPP assessment results during 1987-1990.

In addition to analyzing existing information, the project's staff collected new information through the following four methods: 1) the conduct of focus groups with local Job Connection and adult education staff, and representatives from higher education and skill training agencies; 2) the conduct of a meeting with the project's State Advisory Committee; 3) the conduct of a mail survey of local Job Connection case managers; and 4) the conduct of telephone interviews with representatives from four State welfare agency Job Opportunities and Basic Skills (JOBS) staff.

Focus Groups. Three separate focus groups were held in March 1992. These groups were comprised of representatives from the six DIM districts, and staff from the adult education and skill training programs who work with these districts. Each meeting was approximately two hours in length. During these meetings, participants were asked to describe their current practices for determining clients' satisfactory progress, the types of activities that they have undertaken in transferring information between agencies, and their concerns regarding the implementation of standards for determining satisfactory practice. Participants also were asked to send samples of data collection forms that they have used to communicate information about clients' progress.

State Advisory Meeting. During January 1992, the project's State Advisory Committee was convened to discuss the design of the project and Committee members' experiences to date discussing the development of satisfactory progress standards. The Committee is comprised of representatives from the Connecticut Department of Income

Maintenance, Department of Education (Bureau of Adult Education and Training), Department of Labor, and the higher education system. A member of the Adult Training and Development Network staff also is part of the Committee. During the meeting, the members discussed their main concerns regarding both the specification and implementation of satisfactory standards.

Job Connection Case Manager Survey. During April 1992, a mail survey was sent to all local Job Connection case managers to collect information about the following four issues:

- The types of education service providers that serve Job Connection clients;
- The practices that are used for determining the satisfactory progress of Job Connection clients in adult basic education, ESL, post- secondary, and skill training programs (classroom and on-the-job training);
- Factors that influence the determination of satisfactory progress; and
- Processes that are used to identify and select skill and job training programs for Job Connection clients.

The survey was sent with a letter to each local Job Connection case manager, asking the case manager to return the survey directly to COSMOS Corporation. Respondents were told that their responses would be confidential, and the data would only be reported at the aggregate level by district. A letter describing the survey also was sent to the directors of the DIM district offices (and, in some cases, sub-offices). After the initial mailing of the survey, the project staff called the district office directors and asked them to encourage their case managers to return the surveys. Copies of the letters and survey are presented in Appendix A.

A total of 88 surveys was sent to Job Connection case managers. Of these surveys, two were returned because the respondent was no longer at the address and 46 were returned completed (a response rate of 52 percent). Because the last survey was

received after data analysis had been completed, it is not included in the data tables presented later in this section. The response rates for each of the DIM districts were as follows: 1) Hartford--77 percent, 2) Norwich--75 percent, 3) Bridgeport--45 percent, 4) New Haven--33 percent, 5) Middletown--30 percent, and Waterbury--22 percent.

State Welfare Agency Data Collection. An important component of the data collection for this project has been the information that was collected from other State welfare agencies concerning their policies regarding satisfactory progress standards. As an initial step in this process, the project's director interviewed the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services's Acting Chief of the JOBS Policy Branch to determine the availability of data regarding State practices in determining the satisfactory progress of JOBS clients in education and skill training programs. It was found that these data are not reported to the Federal JOBS Program office in the States' JOBS Plans or other reporting forms. Given this finding, the project staff identified States that were early implementers of the JOBS Program on the assumption that these States would be more likely to have policies established for determining satisfactory progress. The project staff collected information from JOBS staff from the following five States: 1) California, 2) Michigan, 3) New Jersey, 4) Massachusetts, and 5) Pennsylvania.

Telephone interviews were conducted with representatives from each State except California, since COSMOS previously had collected the relevant information from this State. In addition to an initial telephone interview, several follow-up telephone calls were made to the JOBS staff in these States to clarify the information that was sent to COSMOS.

Summary. The development of standards for satisfactory progress has been discussed extensively by State and local Job Connection, education, and skill training program staff in Connecticut. Through the convening of State-level meetings, the publication of policy memoranda and reports, and the conduct of meetings among local providers, State policymakers and local program staff have had opportunities to suggest possible standards that might be considered and to identify the impediments to implementing these standards.

Through the activities of this project, new information has been collected about the

current practices of local Job Connection staff in assessing their clients' progress in programs, and the factors that have assisted and impeded the staffs' collection of client information from other agencies. Data also have been provided about the factors that Job Connection staff consider in selecting local service provider referrals--when a choice is possible. Finally, policy information concerning standards of satisfactory progress has been collected from a sample of States that were early implementers of the JOBS Program.

Data gathered from all sources were analyzed and integrated. The results of this analysis, which provide a background for the draft standards of satisfactory progress presented in this report, are discussed below.

Information Used To Determine Clients' Satisfactory Progress

A critical element that should be considered in the establishment of standards of satisfactory progress is the type of information regarding standards that currently is available and used by local Job Connection staff in assessing their clients. Also important for the implementation of these standards is the ability of Job Connection staff to access information in a timeframe that meets Federal and State reporting requirements.

One objective of this project has been to determine the types of client information that local Job Connection staff have utilized in monitoring their clients' progress in education and skill training programs, as well as the processes they have employed in sharing client information across local agencies. While the survey of local Job Connection case managers was a main source of data about these topics, the information collected in the focus group meetings and in the review of RISC meeting notes and PROJECT LIFE reports also has contributed to our understanding of these topics.

Range of Service Providers. A key responsibility of local Job Connection staff is their referral of clients to education and skill training service providers. In developing clients' education and employment plans, case managers must identify appropriate services for clients based on clients' educational need, geographical location, prior experience with a provider, as well as other factors. Case managers then often

collaborate with these providers in gathering ongoing information about clients' progress and attendance.

According to the results of COSMOS's survey, Job Connection case managers in the six DIM districts referred clients to 95 different education and job training agencies during the past year. Presented in Table 1 is a summary of the types and numbers of providers specified by Job Connection case managers who responded to COSMOS's survey. Some agencies provide multiple types of services to clients in a district (e.g., occupational/vocational skills training and job search/vocational exploration), so that the numbers of agencies reported for each district may not represent separate agencies. Appendix B contains a listing of the agencies that have provided services to Job Connection clients during the past 12 months.

Across all of the DIM districts, the greatest number of agencies utilized is those that provide occupational and skills training. Sixty-eight different agencies were listed as having offered these types of services. The number of adult education service providers is the second largest category of providers, with survey respondents reporting 46 separate agencies. In addition, respondents listed 17 higher educational institutions and 7 agencies that offer job search/vocational exploration. Survey respondents indicated only one agency as having provided on-the-job training.

Types of Information. Local Job Connection staff have had several opportunities to report the types of information they use to determine their clients' progress in education and skill training programs. These opportunities have included a survey undertaken as part of PROJECT LIFE, discussions held during RISC meetings, and the focus groups and survey conducted as part of this project. The findings from these data collection activities are consistent and present a clear pattern of the types of data that both are accessible and utilized by case managers. This information is critical in determining the types of standards of satisfactory progress that will be feasible, since case managers' and service providers' prior experience will influence their capacity to implement any standards that are developed.

Table 1

NUMBER OF EDUCATION AND TRAINING AGENCY PROVIDERS
REPORTED BY DIM DISTRICTS DURING THE PREVIOUS YEAR

Type of Training	DIM District Survey Respondents *					
	Hartford	New Haven	Bridgeport	Norwich	Middletown	Waterbury
Education						
Adult Education	11	4	15	3	6	3
Higher Education	4	1	4	4	5	4
Job Training						
Occupational/Vocational Skills	12	12	16	8	10	5
Job Search/Vocational Exploration	2	1	3	1	0	0
On-the-Job Training	1	0	0	0	0	0
Support Services	0	0	2	1	0	0

* Respondents were asked to check all that apply.

The results from the analysis of COSMOS's survey concerning the types of information used by case managers are similar to the data gathered from other sources. Table 2 presents the findings from the survey. Case managers identified the following five categories of information: 1) measures of skill gain; 2) other education measures, including grade or grade point average, teachers' written and oral assessments, and program certificate; 3) attendance; 4) job skill attainment progress; and 5) measures of clients' behavior and attitude. As indicated in the table, the most frequently-used measure of skill gain is pass rate on the General Educational Development (GED), followed by the CAPP score. Sixty-nine percent of all respondents indicated that they use scores from CAPP testing to assess their clients' progress. Few respondents reported using information from the Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE) (13 percent) or Adult Basic Learning Examination (ABLE) (16 percent). These results reflect the practice of State-funded adult education programs of using the CAPP assessment system to measure student gain.

In addition to measures of skill gain, Job Connection case managers consider other types of educational data in determining clients' progress. All survey respondents reported using a grade or grade point average (G.P.A.), and almost all (89 percent) said that they consider a program certificate as evidence of progress. In terms of teachers' professional judgement, the majority of the Job Connection case managers (80 percent) indicated that they collect teachers' written assessment of clients, while 60 percent noted that they rely on teachers' verbal assessment. These results show that the professional judgement of teachers has been an important data source for case managers in monitoring their clients' progress in programs.

COSMOS's survey also asked case managers to check whether they use attendance as one indicator of progress. All respondents reported using this information.

In addition to collecting data about education measures and attendance, the survey inquired about case managers' use of information about clients' job skill attainment, behavior, and attitudes. Approximately one third of the case managers (36 percent) indicated that they collect information concerning clients' progress in programs that provide job skill training. While these programs were the largest number of referrals

Table 2

TYPES OF INFORMATION DIM DISTRICTS USE TO DETERMINE SATISFACTORY PROGRESS IN EDUCATION AND JOB TRAINING

Type of Information	DIM District Survey Respondents+													
	Hartford		New Haven		Bridgeport		Norwich		Middletown		Waterbury		Total	
	N=17/22*	%	N=5/15*	%	N=9/20*	%	N=9/12*	%	N=3/10*	%	N=2/9*	%	N=45/88*	%
Measure of Skill Gain														
CAPP Score	8	47	5	100	7	78	6	67	3	100	2	100	31	69
TABE Score	4	24	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	100	6	13
ABLE Score	1	6	0	0	4	44	0	0	0	0	2	100	7	16
GED/H.S. Diploma	16	94	5	100	9	100	8	89	3	100	2	100	43	96
Other Skill Measures	5	29	1	20	2	22	2	22	0	0	2	100	12	27
Other Education Measures														
Grade/G.P.A.	17	100	5	100	9	100	9	100	3	100	2	100	45	100
Teacher Written Assess.	13	76	5	100	7	78	8	89	3	100	0	0	36	80
Teacher Verbal Assess.	9	53	5	100	5	56	6	67	2	67	0	0	27	60
Program Certificate	16	94	5	100	9	100	6	67	2	67	2	100	40	89
Attendance	17	100	5	100	9	100	9	100	3	100	2	100	45	100
Job Skill Attainment	8	47	1	20	2	22	3	33	2	67	0	0	16	36
Client Behavioral and Attitude Measures														
Behavior Change	4	24	2	40	4	44	4	44	2	67	0	0	16	36
Attitude Change	8	47	4	80	4	44	5	56	3	100	1	50	22	49
Client Information	7	41	4	80	4	44	4	44	2	67	1	50	22	49
Other	1	6	0	0	0	0	1	11	0	0	0	50	2	4

+ Respondents were asked to check all that apply.
* The ratio represents the number of respondents by the number of surveys sent to each district.

listed by respondents on the survey, the least amount of information is collected from these programs concerning clients' progress. This may be due to a large variation in student testing and performance documentation practices by service providers.

The final type of information gathered by case managers concerns clients' change in behavior and attitude. This information can address clients' progress in either education or job training programs. Almost half (49 percent) of the survey respondents noted that they consider change in a client's attitude as one indicator of progress, while one third (36 percent) noted that they accept data concerning clients' change in behavior. On the survey, case managers also were asked to indicate whether they collect information directly from clients concerning their progress. Almost half (49 percent) responded positively.

Criteria for Determining Progress. While information about the types of information being used by Job Connection case managers in determining progress is useful for setting standards, also important are the criteria case managers have utilized in determining whether progress is satisfactory. On COSMOS's survey, case managers were asked to describe the indicators of satisfactory progress that they have used for each of the information types discussed above. Presented in Table 3 are the criteria that were listed by survey respondents. As indicated in the table, few respondents chose to describe the criteria. However, the information that was provided is similar to that discussed during the focus group and RISC meetings.

The same broad categories of criteria are applied by case managers across measures of education skill gain. As shown in Table 3, case managers generally use an increase in test score, class grade, or grade point average as an indicator of progress. While an increase in score or grade may be the criterion used by case managers, there is little data available about the amount of increase that is considered by case managers to be satisfactory. The information that is available also indicates that there is great variation in the score levels, grades, and attendance rates used by service providers to determine client progress. This variation is reflective of the current practice in DIM districts of having local service providers set their own standards for satisfactory progress.

Table 3

CRITERIA FOR DETERMINING SATISFACTORY PROGRESS
SPECIFIED FOR EDUCATION AND TRAINING MEASURES

Measure	Criteria	Number of Responses
Skill Gain Measures		
CAPP Score	■ Above 223	2
	■ Above 225 for college	1
	■ Increase in score	9
	■ Used for placement only	5
TABE Score	■ Increase in score	1
	■ Used for placement only	1
ABLE Score	■ Increase in score	2
	■ Used for placement only	1
Attainment of GED/ high school diploma	■ Increase in GED score	4
	■ Complete requirement for certificate	2
	■ Grade of C or better in diploma program classes	1
Class Grade/Grade Point Average/ (G.P.A)	■ Grade or average of C or above	6
	■ G.P.A. of 2.0 or above	3
	■ Standard specified by institution	5
Teacher's Written Assessment	■ Statement of at least "good" or satisfactory progress	3
	■ Statement of student's positive attitude toward learning	3
Program Certificate	■ Completion of objectives	2
	■ Attained level of training	2
Other Measures		
Attendance	■ 75% monthly attendance	2
	■ Regular attendance (not defined)	3
	■ Attend 50% of classes	1
Job Skill Attainment	■ Receipt of Certificate	2
	■ Movement to next level of learning	3
	■ Standard specified by provider	2
	■ Attainment of job	1
Other Measures		
Change in Client's Behavior	■ Initiates contact with support services	2
	■ Demonstrates ability to undertake long-range planning	2
Change in Client's Attitude	■ Demonstration of positive attitude toward training	8
	■ Increase in class participation/interaction with instructor	2
Information Reported by Client	■ Articulation of problems and methods for solving them	5

During the focus group discussions and in the RISC meetings, case managers and service providers discussed options for standards, such as an increase in score of three or four scale points on CAPP or an increase of one or two grade levels on other instruments. These data also point to the lack of agreement among service providers about specific criteria that should be used to determine client progress as well as the lack of empirical information from which to devise a standard.

In considering clients' progress in institutions of higher education, case managers have indicated that they use a grade point average of 2.0 or higher for the semester in which a client is enrolled, or a class grade of C or better. This information was reported in the survey and in the focus group meetings.

For measures other than tests or grades, case managers have used the attainment of a certificate or the completion of a program's requirements as indicators of progress. Case managers also look to the institution or service provider to set a standard and assess their clients using this information.

There is also variation in the criterion used by case managers regarding attendance. While the Family Support Act's regulations specify that JOBS participants must have an average of 75 percent attendance during a month's time, case managers report using rates from 70 to 80 percent in making their assessment.

In measuring progress in job skill training programs, case managers indicated in the survey that they consider the receipt of a certificate or movement to the next level of training as evidence. They also rely on service providers to specify a standard for assessing client progress.

The final area in which information about criteria was collected concerns the measurement of change in clients' behavior and attitude. Case managers rely on their own observations and those of service providers in making these assessments, rather than on the collection of formal data through instruments or other systematic processes. As shown in Table 3, information such as clients' ability to plan and their initiation of contact with service providers are two examples of behavioral change. In the area of attitudinal change, the criterion that was cited most frequently by survey respondents was clients' demonstration of a positive attitude toward their training program.

Extent of Information Used. The majority of survey respondents use multiple measures to assess their clients' progress. Table 4 presents the numbers of measures case managers reported using for each information type. An analysis of the data in the table indicates that almost half (48 percent) of the respondents use three measures of skill gain, while 56 percent indicated that they use four "other education measures." In terms of behavioral and attitudinal measures, case managers are as likely to use two measures (36 percent) as they are to use no measures (36 percent). This information about the amount of data that case managers use in making their judgements about clients is important in determining whether the standards of satisfactory progress should include a variety of measures from which case managers can choose.

In addition to inquiring about the types and amounts of information used by case managers, the survey also asked them to indicate whether there were other data that should be collected to determine clients' progress. Presented in Table 5 are the case managers' responses to this question by DIM district. Overall, respondents were equally divided about the need to collect additional data. However, an examination of the responses by district shows that the majority of respondents from Hartford and Norwich do not think that more data are needed, while those from the other districts would like more information.

Summary. Job Connection case managers have established a broad network of service providers in referring their clients to education and skill training programs. These providers offer a range of services in basic education, ESL, high school completion, higher education, and skill training. Once case managers place clients in these programs, they collect multiple types of information to monitor clients' attendance and their progress in learning. While the case managers across the DIM districts use similar types of data, such as CAPP test scores, class grades, program certificates, and professional judgements about clients' attitudes, they do not necessarily assess clients' progress according to the same criteria. Rather, case managers have relied on their individual judgements or the standards that have been set by service providers in determining whether a client is advancing in a program.

Table 4

NUMBER OF MEASURES USED TO DETERMINE
SATISFACTORY IN EDUCATION AND JOB TRAINING
REPORTED BY DIM DISTRICT

Number of Measures Used	DIM District Survey Respondents					
	Hartford	New Haven	Bridgeport	Norwich	Middletown	Waterbury
Measure of Skill Gain						
Five Measures	0	0	0	0	0	0
Four Measures	1	0	2	0	0	2
Three Measures	5	1	2	0	0	0
Two Measures	5	4	3	7	3	0
One Measure	5	0	2	2	0	0
None	1	0	0	0	0	0
Other Education Measures						
Four Measures	9	5	5	4	2	0
Three Measures	3	0	2	3	0	2
Two Measures	5	0	2	2	1	0
One Measure	0	0	0	0	0	0
None	0	0	0	0	0	0
Attendance	17	5	9	9	3	2
Measure of Job Skill	8	1	2	3	2	0
Clinical Behavioral and Attitude Measures						
Three Measures	2	1	2	4	1	0
Two Measures	5	3	1	0	2	2
One Measure	3	1	4	1	0	0
None	7	0	2	4	0	0
Other	1	0	0	1	0	0

Table 5

NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS WHO WOULD LIKE TO COLLECT ADDITIONAL DATA CONCERNING CLIENTS' SATISFACTORY PROGRESS

Type of Response	DIM District Survey Respondents													
	Hartford		New Haven		Bridgeport		Norwich		Middletown		Waterbury		Total	
	N=17	%	N=5	%	N=9	%	N=9	%	N=3	%	N=2	%	N=45	%
Yes	5	29	4	80	4	44	1	11	2	67	2	100	18	40
No	8	47	0	0	3	33	5	56	0	0	0	0	16	36
No Response	4	24	1	20	2	22	3	33	1	33	0	0	11	24

An important component of the client data collection process undertaken by case managers is the methods they use to obtain information from service providers. A description of these methods and the factors that have facilitated and impeded the exchange of information between agencies are discussed next.

Interagency Exchange of Information

Job Connection case managers employ a variety of methods for gathering information about their clients' progress in education and skill training from service providers. With the implementation of the Family Support Act of 1988, DIM district offices have been responsible for monitoring their clients' participation in education and skill training programs in terms of attendance and some measure of program progress, such as grade level increase. Under a broad directive from the Department of Income Maintenance (e.g., see Ford, 1991), district staff have had flexibility in defining clients' progress and in establishing working relationships with agencies that provide services to Job Connection clients. While the district staff have had some success in developing procedures for transferring client information in a timeframe to meet the State Job Connection office's reporting schedule to the U. S. Department of Health and Human Services, they also have encountered difficulties in this process.

Information Collection Processes. COSMOS's survey of case managers identified the primary methods used by case managers to gather information from service providers. Table 6 presents the frequency of the methods that are used by DIM districts. The most common strategy is for case managers to obtain information through the mail, followed by case managers' oral communication with providers.

An examination of the responses by districts indicates that all survey respondents from New Haven and Bridgeport reported that they use all methods except for placement testing. The respondents from the other four districts use these methods in varying degrees.

Table 6

METHODS USED BY SURVEY RESPONDENTS TO COLLECT CLIENT SATISFACTORY PROGRESS INFORMATION

Method	DIM District Survey Respondents *													
	Hartford N=17	%	New Haven N=5	%	Bridgeport N=9	%	Norwich N=9	%	Middletown N=3	%	Waterbury N=2	%	Total N=45	%
Administer Assessment Test Instrument Myself	4	24	2	40	3	33	1	11	2	67	0	0	12	27
Obtain Written Information by Mail	16	94	5	100	9	100	8	89	2	67	1	50	41	91
Obtain Written Information through Discussion	9	53	5	100	8	89	5	56	2	67	0	0	29	64
Obtain Verbal Information from Providers	14	82	5	100	9	100	6	67	3	100	1	50	38	84
Obtain Verbal/Written Information from Client	9	53	5	100	9	100	8	89	3	100	2	100	36	80
Other	0	0	1	20	4	44	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	9

* Respondents were asked to check all that apply.

Impediments to Information Collection. Case managers have encountered a number of difficulties in collecting information about clients' progress from service providers. As shown in Table 7, these difficulties include information not being available in an interpretable form or in the required timeframe. Survey respondents indicated that their greatest difficulty was not being able to interpret the information provided to them concerning basic skills and other education measures. Two other factors that were identified by over half of the respondents were that attendance data are not provided in the required timeframe and that measures of job skill attainment are not available.

This pattern of response was different for New Haven. As indicated in the table, survey respondents reported that the greatest impediment was not receiving attendance information and data about clients' performance on basis skills tests in a timely period.

On the survey, case managers also were asked to describe the greatest difficulties they had encountered in attempting to collect information. Table 8 presents these results. In addition to problems with interpreting the information given to them, case managers noted that they do not understand how to define satisfactory progress and that they have difficulties matching clients with appropriate programs. While this second factor is not an aspect of transferring information, it is an issue that survey respondents identified as problematic in working with their clients.

Facilitating Factors. When asked to rate the factors that have facilitated the interagency transfer of information, survey respondents indicated that the availability of information and their personal relationships with providers were two key factors. Table 9 presents these findings. While the geographical location of provider was not identified as a facilitating factor across all districts, it was cited as important in New Haven, Norwich, and Middletown.

Case managers also were asked to describe the factors that have helped them most in obtaining information from service providers. Table 10 presents these findings. The most-frequently cited factor in all DIM districts, except for Hartford, was case managers' relationship with service providers. The transfer of information between programs has been possible, in part, because of local agency staffs' willingness to work together in communicating about their clients. Their personal commitment to assisting clients has countered some of the difficulties staff have experienced with the information-transfer process.

Table 7

DIFFICULTIES ENCOUNTERED BY SURVEY RESPONDENTS IN COLLECTING CLIENT PROGRESS INFORMATION FROM SERVICE PROVIDERS

Type of Difficulty	DIM District Survey Respondents *													
	Hartford N=17	%	New Haven N=5	%	Bridgeport N=9	%	Norwich N=9	%	Middletown N=3	%	Waterbury N=2	%	Total N=45	%
Basic Skills Test Results/Other Education Measures Not Available in an Interpretable Form	14	82	2	40	5	56	5	56	2	67	1	50	29	64
Basic Skills Test Results/Other Education Measures Not Available in Required Timeframe	9	53	3	60	3	33	2	22	2	67	1	50	20	44
Attendance/Other Information Not Available in Required Timeframe	12	71	4	80	6	67	2	22	1	33	1	50	26	58
Measures of Job Skill Attainment Not Available in an Interpretable Form	12	71	1	20	6	67	5	56	1	33	1	50	26	58
Service Providers Will Not Submit Client Information	1	6	2	40	1	11	2	22	1	33	0	0	7	16
Information That is Reported is Inconsistent or Conflicts	1	6	1	20	1	11	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	7
Other	6	35	1	20	0	0	1	11	1	33	0	0	9	20

* Respondents were asked to check all that apply.

Table 8

DIFFICULTIES THAT HAVE BEEN MOST PROBLEMATIC
IN COLLECTING CLIENT PROGRESS INFORMATION

Type of Difficulty	DIM District Survey Respondents *													
	Hartford N=17	%	New Haven N=5	%	Bridgeport N=9	%	Norwich N=9	%	Middletown N=3	%	Waterbury N=2	%	Total N=45	%
Difficulties in Obtaining Sufficient, Accurate, or Interpretable Test Results, Attendance Information, and/or Progress Reports from Service Providers	7	41	4	80	4	44	1	11	1	33	2	100	19	42
Difficulties in Matching Job Training or Educational Programs With Prospective Clients	5	29	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	11
Difficulty Establishing Relationship With Program Providers	1	6	1	20	1	11	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	7
Need for Clear Definition of What is Meant by Satisfactory Progress	3	18	3	60	4	44	2	22	2	67	0	0	14	31
No Response	3	18	0	0	0	0	6	67	0	0	0	0	9	20

* Respondents were asked to check all that apply.

Table 9

FACTORS THAT HAVE FACILITATED SURVEY RESPONDENTS' COLLECTION OF CLIENT PROGRESS INFORMATION

Factor	DIM District Survey Respondents *													
	Hartford N=17	%	New Haven N=5	%	Bridgeport N=9	%	Norwich N=9	%	Middletown N=3	%	Waterbury N=2	%	Total N=45	%
Availability of Test, Attendance, and/or Other Information	14	82	5	100	8	89	8	89	2	67	1	50	38	84
Geographical Location of Service Provider	1	6	3	60	2	22	5	56	3	100	0	0	14	31
Personal Relationship with Staff at the Service Provider	14	82	5	100	8	89	7	78	3	100	1	50	38	84
Other	2	12	1	20	4	44	0	0	0	0	1	50	8	18

* Respondents were asked to check all that apply.

Table 10

FACTORS THAT HAVE BEEN MOST HELPFUL
IN CLIENT PROGRESS INFORMATION

Factor	DIM District Survey Respondents *													
	Hartford N=17	%	New Haven N=5	%	Bridgeport N=9	%	Norwich N=9	%	Middletown N=3	%	Waterbury N=2	%	Total N=45	%
Availability of Attendance Information Sheets, Timeliness	10	59	3	60	2	22	2	22	3	100	0	0	20	44
Availability of Written Progress Reports and Other Written Information	4	24	3	60	1	11	3	33	1	33	0	0	12	27
Availability of Test Information and Grades	4	24	0	0	2	22	2	22	0	0	0	0	8	18
Verbal Information From Providers	2	12	2	40	2	22	0	0	0	0	0	0	6	13
Relationship With Service Providers	7	41	4	80	7	78	5	56	3	100	1	50	27	60
No Response	3	18	0	0	0	0	3	33	0	0	0	0	6	13

* Respondents were asked to check all that apply.

Another factor that has facilitated the transfer of information is the availability of data. Almost half (44 percent) of the respondents said that being able to access attendance information in a timely manner was beneficial.

The findings from the survey regarding the availability of attendance information and the interpretability of test data are equivocal. Respondents have cited these factors as being both problematic and helpful in monitoring their clients' progress in programs. One reason for this pattern of findings may be that there is variability among case managers within districts in their experiences with these processes. Thus, different case managers may have checked the factors as problematic and helpful. These results point to the need for further clarification about the role of these factors within DIM districts.

Summary of Effective Practices for Transferring Information. The information collected from COSMOS's survey, focus group meetings, and the review of RISC meeting reports indicates that Job Connection case managers and staff from service provider agencies are working together in a variety of ways to transfer client information across agencies. These methods include the use of referral forms that contain information about a client's demographic characteristics; educational and work history; performance on appraisal instruments; and the use of progress forms that contain data on clients' attendance and progress in basic skills, ESL, secondary education, or skill training programs. The progress forms sometimes include ratings of clients' behavior in class, such as clients' ability to receive constructive criticism, follow directions, and ask questions to clarify an assignment. In addition to the transfer of information in written form, case managers and service provider staff have established methods of communicating about clients through telephone discussions and meetings. These methods are particularly effective when a case manager has a question about the progress of a client and is able to discuss the issue with the service provider.

Case managers generally rely on service providers to gather and transfer information about a client, but also receive information from clients about their progress. This practice is necessary in higher education programs, where attendance is not kept in a central office and the client is relied upon to provide the information to the case manager.

While case managers have been creative in working with staff from education and skill training agencies in sharing information, they also have experienced some barriers in gathering the data they need in an appropriate form and timeframe. Of particular concern have been case managers' difficulties interpreting information about clients' performance on basic skills measures, and the frequency with which attendance information is transferred between agencies. Also problematic has been the unavailability of information from skill training agencies regarding clients' progress.

One factor that has facilitated communication between case managers and other agency staff is their personal relationships. The commitment of staff to work together to assist clients has mediated some of the structural difficulties staff have encountered in collecting the required information.

Criteria for Determining Quality Programs

One component of developing standards for determining clients' satisfactory progress in programs involves the specification of criteria for selecting these programs. A goal of COSMOS Corporation's project has been to identify the information that local Job Connection staff use in selecting service providers for their clients, as part of the process of specifying criteria for quality programs. Described next in the report are the types of information case managers consider when identifying potential service providers, as well as information that is not available but would be helpful in this process.

Selection of Service Providers. In COSMOS's survey, Job Connection case managers were asked to indicate the types of information that they use to identify and select agencies that provide education and skill training. While case managers do not always have a wide variety of agencies from which to choose, they do have some discretion in the referral process.

Presented in Table 11 are the findings regarding the types of information respondents reported that they use to select service providers. Respondents rated the following four factors as most important in choosing service providers:

Table 11

TYPES OF INFORMATION USED BY SURVEY RESPONDENTS TO SELECT
EDUCATION AND SKILL TRAINING PROGRAMS FOR JOB CONNECTION CLIENTS

Type of Information	DIM District Survey Respondents*													
	Hartford		New Haven		Bridgeport		Norwich		Middletown		Waterbury		Total	
	N=17	%	N=5	%	N=9	%	N=9	%	N=3	%	N=2	%	N=45	%
Rate of Job Placement	12	71	3	60	8	89	8	89	3	100	2	100	36	80
Skill Training Offered	16	94	5	100	7	78	9	100	3	100	2	100	42	93
Geographical Location	12	71	5	100	8	89	9	100	3	100	0	0	37	82
Personal Experience/Knowledge	12	71	5	100	8	89	4	44	3	100	2	100	34	76
Information from Other Program Clients	12	71	3	60	8	89	6	67	3	100	1	50	33	73
Length of Program	13	76	4	80	4	44	8	89	3	100	1	50	33	73
Recruitment by Provider	10	59	2	40	3	33	3	33	1	33	0	0	19	42
Defualt Rates for Student Loans	6	35	1	20	4	44	1	11	0	0	0	0	12	27
Client's Preference of Service	12	71	2	40	7	78	8	89	2	67	1	50	32	71
Drop Out Rates	9	53	1	20	4	44	3	33	3	100	2	100	22	49
Availability of Support Service	7	41	3	60	4	44	9	100	3	100	0	0	26	58
Relationship Between Skill and Market	14	82	5	100	7	78	8	89	2	67	2	100	38	84
Cost of Program	11	65	5	100	7	78	7	78	3	100	1	50	34	76
Other	1	6	2	40	2	22	1	11	1	33	0	0	7	16

* Respondents were asked to check all that apply.

- Type of skill training offered;
- Relationship between the skill training offered and the job market;
- Geographical location of the service provider; and
- Agency's rate of job placement.

Also rated highly were case managers' personal experience with the service provider and the cost of the program. The case managers' choice of information reflects their concerns about being able to guide clients to skill training experiences that will result in a job placement. This concern was echoed in the focus group meetings, where case managers expressed their frustration with placing clients in skill training programs that are not matched to the local labor market or for which there are limited job opportunities.

Information Needed for Selecting Programs. When asked to describe the types of information that they have not been able to access but that they would like to have, survey respondents noted that data about agencies' job placement rates were difficult to obtain as was information about program services and requirements. Table 12 presents these results. Since respondents were asked to generate information rather than react to a list of items, it is not clear that the other types of information listed on the table are available to case managers. For example, while information about default rates on student loans and dropout rates was identified by only 18 percent of the respondents as not being available, it is not reasonable to assume that, in fact, this information is available. Rather, it may be the case that case managers do not solicit this information about service providers.

States' Criteria for Determining Satisfactory Progress

Part of the data collection for this project has involved gathering information about standards for satisfactory progress from other States. Five States that were early implementers of the Federal JOBS Program--California, Michigan, New Jersey, Massachusetts, and Pennsylvania--were selected for study and telephone interviews were

Table 12

TYPES OF INFORMATION NOT AVAILABLE TO DIM DISTRICTS REGARDING THE QUALITY OF PROGRAMS

Type of Information	DIM District Survey Respondents *													
	Hartford N=17	%	New Haven N=5	%	Bridgeport N=9	%	Norwich N=9	%	Middletown N=3	%	Waterbury N=2	%	Total N=45	%
Job Placement Information (Providers' Rate of Placement, Types of Placements Made by Providers, Salary Requirements)	7	42	2	40	5	56	5	56	1	33	1	50	21	47
Information About Relationships Between Skill Training Opportunities and Local Labor Market	6	35	2	40	2	22	0	0	0	0	0	0	10	22
Definition of Satisfactory Progress/How Satisfactory Progress is Determined	2	12	1	20	4	44	0	0	0	0	0	0	7	16
Information About Default Rates on Student Loans and Dropout Rates	3	18	1	20	2	22	2	22	0	0	0	0	8	18
Information About Reputation of Provider	4	24	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	33	0	0	5	11
Information About Available Programs and Information About Program Services and Requirements	7	41	5	100	2	22	3	33	3	100	0	0	20	44
Did Not Answer Question	1	6	0	0	1	11	3	33	0	0	0	0	5	11

* Respondents were asked to check all that apply.

conducted with representatives from each State except California. Policy documents were collected from the States and the information concerning the criteria for determining clients' progress in education programs was summarized. Table 13 presents these findings. While States also were asked to send information about criteria for determining clients' progress in skill training programs, limited written information was available.

All of the States except for Pennsylvania provided specific information about the determination of clients' progress in programs. Pennsylvania's policy document addressed criteria for placing clients in programs, but did not specify the measures of progress. The information collected from States is presented in Table 13 according to education program type as defined by the State. California has the most clearly delineated standards, with the required scale scores on the Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System (CASAS) Survey Achievement test being stated. Michigan uses competency tests that are administered by local providers and relies on these providers to set the standard. New Jersey does not specify the type of measure that should be used, but relies on individual service providers to judge clients' progress. Finally, Massachusetts specifies the instrument and levels for clients in ESL programs, and relies on local providers' use of competency tests for assessing clients' progress.

The representatives from the States who provided this information indicated that these were working guidelines in many cases that were just beginning to be implemented. These individuals did not have information about the success of each State in carrying out these standards.

Table 13

CRITERIA USED BY STATES TO DETERMINE
SATISFACTORY PROGRESS OF JOBS PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS

State	Education Program			
California	Basic Skills	ESL	PreGED or Advanced ABE	GED
	CASAS Survey Achievement Tests for math and reading. * If the participant's appraisal score in math or reading is equal to or less than 214, he/she must gain five test points for every three months of regularly attended instruction. * If a participant's appraisal scores in math and reading are equal to or less than 214, he/she must gain a combined total of five points for every three months of regularly attended instruction. Exit Certification: Participants must score at least 215 on the CASAS GAIN Basic Skills Certification Test. The test utilizes a multiple choice format and includes reading and mathematics.	CASAS Survey Achievement Test Instrument for reading and listening. * If the participant's GAIN appraisal score on the listening test is less than 200, or the participant is unable to be tested due to limited English Comprehension skills, he/she must gain five points on the listening test for every three months of regularly attended instruction. The listening test is used until the participant scores above 200. * If the appraisal score is 200 thru 214, the participant must gain a combined total of five points on both the reading and the listening tests for every three months of regularly attended instruction. Exit Certification: The participant must score at least 215 on the CASAS GAIN ESL Certification Test. The test utilizes a multiple choice format in reading and listening and also includes a brief interview for assessing oral proficiency.	CASAS Survey Achievement Tests may be used to determine satisfactory progress, or standards may be developed by the provider. * If a participant has an appraisal score of 215 through 224 on both reading and math, and does not have a high school diploma, he/she must gain a combined total of five points for both reading and math tests for every three months of regularly attended instruction. Exit Certification: The participant must score at least 225 on both reading and math CASAS Survey Achievement Tests.	Standards agreed upon by the county Welfare Department and the provider are used for determining client progress. Exit Certification: The participant must pass the GED at a level indicated by the California Department of Education to receive a GED certificate or a high school diploma.

(Continued on next page)

Table 13, (Continued)

State	Education Program			
Michigan	Remedial Education	ESL	High School Completion/GED	Postsecondary Education
	Providers are responsible for submitting progress reports each semester or term to the Department of Social Services (DSS). Tests and assessment results are to be submitted to the local office for inclusion in each participant's case record.	Providers submit monthly progress reports to Michigan Opportunity and Skills Training (MOST) which are used to determine a participant's supportive services needs. A five month review of student status is required.	Academic/vocational evaluations centering on the participant's knowledge in math, science, reading, and writing should be conducted.	Participant's must meet satisfactory progress standards as defined by the institution.
	Expected Outcome: Competency tests results are used to confirm a participant's ability to read, write and compute at the ninth grade level or, participants must obtain two years of grade level progress within a calendar year.	Expected Outcome/Progress: Participants must complete an assigned course of study that results in enhanced proficiency in English and the ability to enroll in other education or job training programs.	Tests that meet the U.S. Department of Education's requirements must be administered once a participant has completed required courses. Tests are used to determine an individual's qualifications for a high school diploma or a GED certificate.	A quarterly progress report must be submitted to MOST staff so that the participant's progress, attendance, and need for additional services can be determined. The staff is also to be provided with term or semester grades. Expected Outcome/Progress: Participant's are expected to receive an associate's or a baccalaureate degree and employment in the field of study.

(Continued on next page)

Table 13, (Continued)

State	Education Program
New Jersey	Educational Program A participant's satisfactory progress is determined by the educational institution or program's written standards and is measured on a basis of less than one year. Satisfactory progress standards must be approved by the appropriate state and/or local education agency and the county IV-A agency. * Standards must include a qualitative measure (e.g., satisfactory grade point average or performance) and a quantitative measures (e.g., a reasonable time in which the participant has completed his/her course of study).
Massachusetts	Educational Program * Participants who score below grade level 4.9 on the pre-test or those who are below Mainstream English Language Training (MELT) level 7, but above MELT level 4 must achieve an increase of one (1) grade level or one (1) MELT level in academic skills as measured by pre and post testing. * Participants who score below grade level 7.9 but above grade level 4.9 on the pre-test or those who are below MELT level 4 must achieve 2 grade or MELT levels in academic skills as measured by pre and post testing.

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III. PROPOSED STANDARDS FOR DETERMINING CLIENTS' SATISFACTORY PROGRESS AND GUIDELINES FOR SELECTING QUALITY PROGRAMS

Introduction

The information collected in this project about Job Connection case managers' practices in gathering data and making decisions about their clients' participation and progress in education and skill training programs provides critical background knowledge for developing draft standards of satisfactory progress. As the results from the survey, focus group meetings, and review of RISC meeting reports indicate, case managers are employing a wide variety of methods to gather information and make decisions about their clients' progress. The data about staff's current practices offer an initial understanding of the types of standards that are feasible. However, the standards currently used by service providers have not been developed based on empirical data about the performance of clients and vary considerably across DIM districts. Because of this variation in development and practice, additional information must be utilized in specifying standards for determining clients' satisfactory progress.

The policies that have been set by other State welfare agencies also provide comparative information that DIM can consider in approving standards. Since most States are in the process of setting standards, data are not yet available concerning the success of the implementation of these standards. Thus, DIM's work on standards should assist other States welfare agencies in their developmental activities.

In addition to creating draft standards, one objective of this project has been to specify draft guidelines that can assist Job Connection case managers in selecting skill training service providers. The data collected about the information that case managers currently use in choosing skill training programs serve as a starting point in formulating guidelines for quality programs.

This section of the report presents draft standards for determining clients' progress in education and skill training programs and draft guidelines for the selection of quality skill training programs. Discussed next are factors that should be considered in the establishment of these standards and guidelines. Also presented in this section are the mitigating circumstances that should be considered in applying the standards.

Framework for Standards and Guidelines

The regulations for the Family Support Act of 1988 specify broad criteria for developing standards of satisfactory progress. These criteria, which were presented in Section I of this report, were used by the project team as one guideline in writing draft standards. In particular, the following three criteria were considered in the development of the standards:

- Clients' progress must be measured on the basis of less than a year (such as a term or quarter);
- The standards must include a qualitative measure of the clients' progress (such as a grade point average); and
- The standards must include a quantitative measure of clients' progress (such as a time limit for the completion of the program or course of study).

In addition to these criteria, the project team identified three other factors that should be considered in setting standards of satisfactory progress and quality program guidelines. These were: 1) the extent to which the standards and guidelines are reasonable and fair--i.e, are based on empirical data or on other information about clients' capacities to perform in a specific timeframe; 2) the feasibility of the standards and guidelines--i.e, the extent to which information needed to implement a standard is available and accessible to Job Connection case managers; and 3) the extent to which the standards and guidelines are flexible so that they can be modified to meet the special situations or needs of clients.

Reasonable and Fairness Criterion. Since the implementation of standards for assessing the satisfactory performance of Job Connection clients has implications for their receipt of Job Connection Special Benefits and AFDC eligibility, it is important that these standards be reasonable and fair. One approach is to set standards that reflect the performance capacity of Job Connection clients. This involves developing a standard (e.g., the amount of increase in scale score that a client is expected to achieve in a time period, such as one semester of instruction) based on the known achievement levels of

clients or of adults with similar demographic characteristics, educational backgrounds, and life experiences. This type of standard is a relative one that is derived from actual rather than optimal or hypothetical client performance outcomes. A contrasting approach, where a standard is set based on a level that is optimal for clients, would utilize absolute rather than relative outcome levels. In specifying standards of progress for Job Connection clients, a reasonable and fair approach would be to set a relative standard based on empirical evidence.

Another factor that must be considered in developing standards is the timeframe within which a client is expected to make satisfactory progress. Again, the most appropriate criterion to use in setting the standard for time would be a comparable group of adults' past experience. In the case of Job Connection clients, most basic skills service providers assess client progress using standardized instruments on a semester basis. One reason for this time period is that the instruments which are used by these service providers (e.g., CAPP test, TABE, ABLE) are not designed to be administered more frequently than after approximately 75 hours of instruction (assuming that this amount of instruction occurs in a timeframe of at least approximately three months). Thus, a reasonable timeframe for measuring clients' progress using standardized basic skills instruments appears to be after approximately 75 hours of instruction over a period of at least three months or a semester.

Another component of the time issue concerns the amount of time instruction is available to Job Connection clients. For example, the length of time basic skills and skill training programs offer instruction varies considerably across the State. The standards for satisfactory progress that are set must take into account the amount of time that clients can access instructional programs. It would be unreasonable to set a criterion for progress that is based on an assumed amount of instructional time (e.g., progress as measured by a standardized test after 75 hours of instruction) that, in fact, is not available to clients.

A final consideration regarding the development of reasonable and fair standards concerns the documentation of professional judgement. As was discussed in Section II of this report, case managers use their own judgements and those reported by service

providers in assessing the progress of their clients. In order to ensure that clients are being judged using similar criteria, guidelines for documenting professional judgement should be part of the standards of satisfactory progress. That is, case managers and service providers should address similar categories of clients' attitudes and behaviors when recording their judgements in these areas.

Feasibility of Standards and Guidelines. The second factor that is important to consider in developing standards of progress and guidelines for quality programs is feasibility. The main issue regarding feasibility is the extent to which information for implementing standards and guidelines is available and accessible to case managers. For example, client attendance in programs is one type of standard of satisfactory performance. Education and skill training service providers document their clients' attendance according to different time periods. Any standard that is set regarding client attendance must take into consideration the extent to which this information is available to case managers.

The availability of information also is an issue in developing guidelines for quality programs. Case managers have indicated that they would like to have data about agencies' job placement rates, institutions' student loan default rates, and the match between skill training programs and the local labor market. However, while this information may be available, it may not be accessible to case managers in a form and timeframe that is useful. The extent to which such information can be accessed must be considered in the development of guidelines for quality programs.

Flexibility of Standards and Guidelines. A primary objective of the Federal JOBS Program is to assist welfare clients in achieving economic independence. The requirement that these clients participate in education and skill training programs was instituted to help clients improve their knowledge and skills and thus increase their likelihood of achieving economic independence. The use of standards for measuring clients' progress in education and skill training programs has two purposes: 1) to provide information that can be used to guide and assist clients as they participate in education and skill training programs, and 2) to provide data that can be used in monitoring the overall functioning of the Job Connection program and in determining

clients' receipt of special benefits. Because of these multiple purposes of standards and the potential impact on a client who is assessed as not making satisfactory progress, it is important that any standards that are set be flexible. The guiding principle is to set standards for Job Connection clients that are the same as those set for other clients participating in programs and to provide a process whereby case managers can consider Job Connection clients' special circumstances or needs in applying the standards.

Draft Standards for Satisfactory Performance

Background Data. The types of information that Job Connection case managers use to judge their clients' progress in education and skill training programs have been one source of data examined in developing standards. In addition, there are two other types of data that have been examined. The first is the prior work that was undertaken by the Connecticut Department of Education staff in recommending approaches to developing standards of satisfactory progress. The recommendation made by these staff (see Woolis, 1990) was to give service providers an array of client outcomes (with stated minimum levels of performance) from which to choose in assessing client progress. For example, the following categories of outcomes were suggested:

- Academic performance;
- Attendance, punctuality;
- Life and employability skills;
- Ability to set personal and career goals; and
- Self esteem.

The approach that was envisioned was that local service providers would specify a range of possible outcomes for clients and use corresponding instruments and data collection processes to monitor their clients' progress.

The second source of data that has been examined is adult education participants' past performance on the CAPP test. In keeping with the assumption that a reasonable standard is one that is based on clients' actual rather than desired performance, the data analyses that COSMOS Corporation conducted for the Connection Department of Education during the years 1987-1988, 1988-1989, and 1989-1990 were summarized and are presented in Table 14. Shown in the table are the results for valid pre- and post-test gains on the CAPP Survey Achievement Test in reading and listening for each of three years for which data are available. The test data are from adult education program participants from across the State. While Job Connection clients were participants in these programs during the periods data were collected, they most likely represented a small percentage of the participants for whom data were collected. Thus, the gains in test score that are presented reflect the capacities of a student population broader than that of Job Connection clients.

As indicated in Table 14, the amount of progress has differed by test level (which generally corresponds to class level) of participant. Another observation is that, for the most part, the average gain score has decreased as the number of participants has increased. Based on these data, it would be reasonable to expect that Job Connection clients could be expected to show an increase of at least three scale score points after 75 hours of instruction provided over a time period of at least three months or one semester of instruction. While there are differences in growth between levels and between reading and listening, for the ease of implementation of the standard it is recommended that one score be used initially for the standards. The standards could be adjusted if data from the initial implementation results revealed that the differences between levels and reading and listening were significant.

Draft Standards for Education Programs. The following draft qualitative and quantitative standards are proposed for determining Job Connection clients' progress in education programs. There must be qualitative evidence of clients' progress in basic skills, ESL, academic, or high school completion programs as indicated by the standards that are listed below. There also must be quantitative evidence of clients' progress in education programs as indicated by the amount of time allotted to complete the course of study or program.

Table 14

SUMMARY OF MEAN CAPP SCORE GAINS IN
READING AND LISTENING FOR PROGRAM YEARS 1987-1990

READING

Program Year	CAPP Level							
	Level A		Level B		Level C		Mixed Level	
	Mean Gain	No. of Students	Mean Gain	No. of Students	Mean Gain	No. of Students	Main Gain	No. of Students
1987-1988	9.85	83	7.5	197	4.1	202	---	---
1988-1989	5.1	77	4.3	184	4.5	247	---	---
1989-1990	3.9	76	2.2	116	4.9	140	5.2	225
Mean Gain	6.3		4.7		4.5			

LISTENING

Program Year	CAPP Level							
	Level A		Level B		Level C		Mixed Level	
	Mean Gain	No. of Students	Mean Gain	No. of Students	Mean Gain	No. of Students	Main Gain	No. of Students
1987-1988	10.1	112	15.05	66	2.6	19	---	--
1988-1989	5.9	283	5.0	187	5.0	65	---	--
1989-1990	5.0	526	3.8	410	1.2	192	4.3	76
Mean Gain	7		7.95		2.9			

- Basic Skills/ESL Programs. Clients' progress in basic skills or ESL programs must be assessed after 75 hours of instruction, provided that this amount of instruction occurs over a period of at least three months, or by the end of each semester (not to exceed four months) that a client is enrolled in a program. This information can be one of the following:

  a. Progress in acquiring basic skills or English language skills as indicated by gain scores on a standardized instrument. The following are the minimal level of gains that clients are expected to achieve:

     - CAPP Survey Achievement Test or Employability Competency System (ECS) Test: a scale score gain of at least 3 points in reading or listening; or

     - TABE: a gain of at least 1 grade level (for programs not required to use CAPP); or

     - ABLE: a gain of at least 1 grade level (for programs not required to use CAPP).

     OR

  b. Progress in acquiring basic skills or English language skills as indicated by clients' mastery of a percent of competencies specified for the course. A list of the competencies, the percent that is required to be demonstrated (as indicated by the service provider), and the specific evidence of a client's demonstration of the competencies must be provided.

- High School Completion Programs. Clients' progress in a GED program, the External Diploma Program (EDP), or the Credit Diploma Program must be assessed at least by the end of each semester a client is enrolled in one of these programs. The standards for progress for these programs are as follows:

a. GED: The attainment of the GED certificate or an increase of at least points on one of the GED practice tests over the period of a semester; or

b. External Diploma Program: For clients in the Generalized Assessment component of the EDP: the completion of at least two tasks with the demonstration of at least 50 percent of the competencies in each task; or for clients in Diagnosis: the movement from Diagnosis into Generalized Assessment as determined by the EDP; or for clients in the Individualized Assessment component of the EDP: the demonstration of the competencies required by the Individualized Assessment component of the EDP or the attainment of the high school diploma. This progress must occur over the period of a semester; or

c. Credit Diploma Program: The attainment of progress over a semester as determined by the program's coordinator. For example, this may include the completion of a number of courses with a grade or C or higher, the attainment of credit for experiential learning or participation in community services, or the completion of other program requirements.

- Higher Education Programs. Clients' progress in a higher education program must be assessed at least by the end of each semester a client is enrolled. A client is expected to achieve the standard that is set by the institution in which he/she is enrolled for maintaining good academic standing.

Related Information for Education Standards. In addition to the qualitative and quantitative standards described above, the Family Support Act requires that information about JOBS clients' attendance be reported to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. This information is reported about a sample of clients' average attendance over a period of a month. In order for this information to be available to the Job Connection office, district DIM offices will need to collect information about clients'

attendance in education programs on a monthly basis. The proposed attendance standard is that clients must attend 75 percent of the classes over a month's period and may have no more than 3 unexcused absences in a semester.

Another source of information that can be used to supplement the standards for education programs presented above is the professional judgement of service providers. Two types of judgements are possible: 1) judgements concerning clients' attitudes, such as service providers' assessment of clients' demonstration of a positive attitude or their understanding of the requirements for successful completion of the program; and 2) judgements concerning clients' behavior in class, such as service providers' assessment of the extent to which a client participates in class, works with other students, or demonstrates the ability to undertake long-range planning. It is proposed that standard forms be developed for service providers to use in documenting professional judgement and that this information be collected from service providers when a client's progress in a program is questionable or additional information is needed by the case manager to make a determination of the client's status.

Draft Standards for Skill Training Programs. The following draft standards are proposed for determining Job Connection clients' progress in skill training programs, including classroom-based and on-the-job training programs. The standard for attendance described for education programs also applies to skill training programs. The standards for skill training programs are as follows:

- Classroom-Based Programs. Clients' progress in classroom-based skill training programs must be assessed at least by the end of each semester (not to exceed four months) that a client is enrolled in a program. Either entire programs or components (sometimes referred to as units) of a program may be used as the standard for instruction. Documentation of progress in a program or a component of a program can be one of the following:

  a. Progress as documented by a grade of C or higher for a course or a grade point average of C or higher. If a grade point average is used as the measure of a client's progress, the client may earn a D in a course as long as the grade point average is C or higher; or

b. Progress as indicated by clients' increase in score as measured by an instrument appropriate for the skill being taught. The score gain that would be adequate given the type of instrument that is being used must be designated; or

c. Progress as indicated by clients' mastery of a percent of competencies specified for the course. A list of the competencies, the percent that is required to be demonstrated (as determined by the service provider), and the specific evidence of a client's demonstration of the competencies must be provided.

- On-the-Job Training Programs. Clients' progress in on-the-job training programs must be assessed at least by the end of each semester a client is participating in the program. The documentation may include a rating of the clients' attitude toward the work, behavior in carrying out job responsibilities, and other information about specific skills required for the job for which the client is being trained. A rating scale such as that proposed in the previous discussion concerning Professional Judgement could be used by service providers, along with a narrative statement of a client's progress.

Draft Guidelines for Selecting Quality Programs

The following guidelines are proposed for the selection of quality service providers for skill training programs. These guidelines were derived, in part, from the work undertaken by the City of New York Human Resources Administration (Day, 1990).

- Non-profit, vocational technical schools and private occupational schools must be approved by the Connecticut Department of Education;

- Service providers offering adult education classes must provide documentation that Job Connection clients enrolled in their adult education programs are making satisfactory progress as defined by DIM;

- A service provider must have secured employment for a minimum of 70 percent of Job Connection enrollees within 6 months of their training completion date during 1991-1992. This rate would increase or decrease with a change in the economic condition of the State;

- A service provider whose students receive Federally-sponsored student loans must have a default rate of less than 20 percent (or a rate determined by the Connecticut Department of Education); and

- A service provider that is an institution of higher education must be approved by the State agency overseeing higher education programs.

Determination of Probationary Period and Mitigating Circumstances

The Family Support Act includes considerations for a probationary period and provisions for mitigating circumstances in applying standards for determining clients' progress in education and skill training programs. The recommendations for these considerations are described next.

Probationary Period. If a client does not meet the standard for progress specified for an education or skill training program, he/she may be placed on probation for a period of time to allow him/her the opportunity to meet the required standard of progress. In keeping with the criterion of flexibility of standards described earlier in this report, it is proposed that an institution's regulations regarding the placement of students on probation be used as the first source of information for determining a client's period of probation. For example, the higher education institutions in the State and many of the agencies providing skill training programs have specific policies regarding probation. These may be used by the case manager in determining the flexibility that can be given to a client in meeting the standard. If a program, agency, or institution does not have a stated probation policy, then it is proposed that a client be allowed to have a probationary period of one semester (not to exceed four months) to meet the required standard.

Mitigating Circumstances. There are several circumstances that may interfere with a client's ability to progress satisfactorily in a program or course of study. One barrier to client progress that has been discussed extensively by case managers and service providers is clients' learning disabilities and learning difficulties. This issue also has

been addressed in a recent report by Anderson (1992), and recommendations have been made for steps that service providers can take to identify clients with learning difficulties and to assist them in carrying out their educational programs.

The likelihood that a Job Connection client with a diagnosed learning disability or a presumed learning difficulty will meet the standards of progress that are required for clients depends, in part, on the Job Connection Plan that has been set for the client. For example, if an adult enters the Job Connection program with documented evidence that he/she has a diagnosed learning disability, it is proposed that the case manager prepare a Job Connection Plan for this client that sets reasonable timelines for progress based on the type and extent of the learning disability. The case manager could develop the Plan and timelines in consultation with a knowledgeable service provider so that a plausible Plan and set of expectations are set for the client.

If a client without a documented learning disability does not meet the standard of progress in an education program, the first step is for the case manager to determine the reason why the standard is not being met. This determination should be made in consultation with the service provider. As described in Anderson's paper (1992), a client may have a learning difficulty because of a physical impediment (e.g., a sight or hearing problem), a learning style difference, information processing difficulties, or other factors. In compiling the information about the client's lack of progress, the case manager should obtain an assessment of the client's work based on the service provider's professional judgement. This information could be used by the case manager to determine if the progress that had been made by the client was satisfactory given the client's mitigating circumstances (e.g., the learning difficulty that had been identified). If a client is determined to have a learning difficulty that prevents him/her for meeting the specified standard of satisfactory progress, the case manager could revise the client's Job Connection Plan to set outcomes that were reasonable based on the client's abilities.

Other types of mitigating circumstances may prevent clients from progressing satisfactorily, such as sickness, family emergencies, and homelessness. Case managers should gather information from the client and/or service provider about the type of circumstance and make a determination about the validity and severity of the difficulty. Once this determination is made, the case manager could extend the period of time in which the client is expected to meet the standard for satisfactory progress. The recommended period of time is a semester (not to exceed four months).

IV. IMPLEMENTATION OF STANDARDS FOR SATISFACTORY PROGRESS

Introduction

This section of the report discusses the issues that should be considered by Job Connection in planning for the implementation of the draft standards for satisfactory progress and guidelines for selecting quality programs. Described are the factors that must be addressed to ensure a successful implementation, particularly with regard to staff training.

Factors Affecting Implementation

The success of the implementation of the standards for determining Job Connection clients' satisfactory progress in education and skill training programs and the guidelines for selecting quality programs will depend on three main factors: 1) the extent to which State agencies (i.e., Departments of Income Maintenance, Education, Labor, and Higher Education) can work cooperatively in disseminating information to service providers about the standards and in encouraging service providers to work with case managers in transferring information about Job Connection clients; 2) the extent to which Job Connection local staff are trained and provided with support (i.e., standardized forms) to implement the standards and guidelines; and 3) the amount and quality of information that is available about programs and economic conditions that can be used by case managers in selecting service providers. Recommendations regarding each of these factors are discussed next.

Interagency Cooperation. Critical to the success of this effort is the working relationship among the agencies who serve Job Connection clients. Through previous efforts and this project's Advisory Committee, representatives from the Departments of Income Maintenance, Education, and Labor and the higher education system have come together to discuss possible standards and the impediments to implementing any standards that are developed. The success of the implementation of the proposed draft standards will now depend on the ability of these agencies to carry out activities that can facilitate the implementation of the standards. The following recommendations are made

regarding the types of activities that can be conducted by State agencies (including higher education) serving Job Connection clients:

- Disseminate information to service providers in each system about the standards and the importance of working with local Job Connection staff in providing client information and assistance; and
- Convene quarterly meetings with representatives from the State agencies during the first year of the implementation of the standards to identify barriers to implementation and propose solutions to these barriers.

Job Connection staff may also consider disseminating information about the standards directly to service providers not funded by these State agencies, such as proprietary schools.

Another aspect of interagency cooperation involves the development of forms that can be used across local programs to share information. For example, the current revision of the CAPP management information system forms provides an opportunity for the Department of Education and DIM to review the form to ensure that it can facilitate the transfer of information, such as attendance and CAPP scores, from education service providers to case managers. It is recommended that representatives from the two agencies review the forms to maximize the use of the forms in interagency transfer of information.

Staff Training. The most important component of the implementation is the training and follow-up support that will be provided to case managers. Case managers will need to receive training in the following: 1) how to interpret the standards, 2) methods for collecting information about client progress and mitigating circumstances from service providers and clients, 3) procedures for making decisions about client progress, and 4) procedures for collecting and interpreting information about the quality of service providers.

It is recommended that an initial training of four hours be conducted to review these topics. Two or three representatives from each of the DIM districts should be required

to participate in the training, with the understanding that one individual from each district will serve as the key person for assisting other case managers in implementing the standards. The first part of the training should be the discussion of the standards. The standards should be presented to the training session participants in a brief document not to exceed five pages. The next part of the training session should be devoted to a discussion of the practices case managers currently are using to collect information from service providers and how these practices can be expanded. Brief descriptions of effective practices could be presented by case managers. Also discussed should be the circumstances under which clients can be expected to collect and deliver to the case manager information about his/her progress in a program. The third topic discussed in the training should be the interpretation of data. Simulated client records could be used in an interactive exercise to provide case managers with experience in reviewing client information and making a decision about a client's progress in a program. The last topic covered in the training should be the guidelines for selecting quality programs, including a discussion about the types of information that currently are available to case managers and resources in the community that might be consulted.

After the initial training, follow-up technical assistance may need to be provided to case managers by Job Connection staff. The feasibility of this process and the types of information that would be given through telephone technical assistance are issues that should be addressed by Job Connection staff.

Provision of Information. Case managers currently use a variety of information to assess the quality and characteristics of service providers to whom they refer clients. The results of COSMOS's survey indicate that more and better information is needed to assist case managers in this process. It is recommended that DIM work with other State agencies in identifying sources of information about service providers and local economic conditions that could be disseminated to case managers on a periodic basis. For example, the Department of Education could provide a list annually of the State-funded basic skills programs and the hours of their operation. This would assist case managers in selecting an appropriate service provider for their clients.

Summary. The implementation of the standards for satisfactory progress will depend, in large measure, on the willingness of State and local agency staff to work together in collecting and disseminating information that can facilitate Job Connection clients' education and training. This joint work can be facilitated by developing forms for transferring information and by supporting local staff through training and technical assistance activities. The practices currently underway in the DIM districts are starting points for enhancing the system of services for Job Connection clients and for improving their capacities to attain economic independence.

REFERENCES

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Day, Carl, "Revised Rules Governing Vocational Training Programs" and "Training Approval Policy," The City of New York Human Resources Administration, New York City, New York, August 1, 1990.

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Appendix A

LETTER TO DIM DISTRICT DIRECTORS

LETTER TO JOB CONNECTION CASE MANAGERS

SURVEY OF DEPARTMENT OF INCOME MAINTENANCE
DISTRICT OFFICES REGARDING PRACTICES
FOR DETERMINING SATISFACTORY PROGRESS
OF JOB CONNECTION CLIENTS

May 8, 1992

Dear Director:

As you are aware, the Department of Income Maintenance (DIM), in collaboration with the State Department of Education, has procured the services of COSMOS Corporation to develop guidelines for implementing a consistent standard of progress for Aid to Families with Dependent Children recipients who participate in the Job Connection. As part of the development of these guidelines, COSMOS is conducting a survey of DIM staff who work with Job Connection clients. The survey is designed to collect the following information: a) the current practices of DIM staff in determining the satisfactory progress of Job Connection clients, b) the factors that have facilitated and impeded DIM staffs' work with education and job training service providers, and c) the criteria that DIM staff use in determining the quality of skill and job training programs.

During March 1992, focus groups were held with Job Connection staff and representatives from education and job training service providers that work with Job Connection clients. The focus group participants identified processes they use to share information about the progress of these clients as well as difficulties they have encountered in obtaining information and identifying appropriate services for clients. This survey is intended to collect additional information about these issues that will help in the development of guidelines for determining Job Connection clients' satisfactory progress.

Each Job Connection worker in your district is being sent a copy of the survey and is requested to complete and return the survey to me by May 24, 1992. The information provided by the respondents on the survey will be confidential, and the results of the survey will only be reported in aggregate form. A stamped return envelope has been included with the survey. Enclosed is a copy of the survey for your information.

Thank you for your assistance in the survey. The information provided by your staff is an important component of the work that we are undertaking for DIM. Please do not hesitate to call me at (202) 728-3939 if you have any questions about the survey.

Sincerely,

Judith A. Alamprese
Director, Education &
Training Group

Enclosure

May 8, 1992

Dear Job Connection Staff Member:

As you are aware, the Department of Income Maintenance (DIM), in collaboration with the State Department of Education, has procured the services of COSMOS Corporation to develop guidelines for implementing a consistent standard of progress for Aid to Families with Dependent Children recipients who participate in the Job Connection. As part of the development of these guidelines, COSMOS is conducting a survey of DIM staff who work with Job Connection clients. The survey is designed to collect the following information: a) the current practices of DIM staff in determining the satisfactory progress of Job Connection clients, b) the factors that have facilitated and impeded DIM staffs' work with education and job training service providers, and c) the criteria that DIM staff use in determining the quality of skill and job training programs.

During March 1992, focus groups were held with Job Connection staff and representatives from education and job training service providers that work with Job Connection clients. The focus group participants identified processes they use to share information about the progress of these clients as well as difficulties they have encountered in obtaining information and identifying appropriate services for clients. This survey is intended to collect additional information about these issues that will help in the development of guidelines for determining Job Connection clients' satisfactory progress.

Enclosed is a copy of the survey for you to complete. Please return the survey to me at COSMOS Corporation in the enclosed envelope by **May 24, 1992**. The information that you provide on the survey will be confidential, and the results of the survey will only be reported in aggregate form.

Thank you for your assistance in the survey. The information that you provide is an important component of the work that we are undertaking for DIM. Please do not hesitate to call me at (202) 728-3939 if you have any questions about the survey.

Sincerely,

Judith A. Alamprese
Director, Education &
Training Group

Enclosure

Name: _____ District: _____
(optional) Office: _____
Position: _____

SURVEY OF DEPARTMENT OF INCOME MAINTENANCE
DISTRICT OFFICES REGARDING PRACTICES
FOR DETERMINING SATISFACTORY PROGRESS
OF JOB CONNECTION CLIENTS

This survey is intended to collect information about the following four issues: 1) the types of education service providers that serve Job Connection clients; 2) the practices that are used for determining the satisfactory progress of Job Connection clients in adult basic education, English-as-a-second-language, post secondary, on-the-job training, and skill training programs; 3) factors that influence the determination of satisfactory progress; and 4) processes that are used to identify and select skill and job training programs for Job Connection clients.

1. Please list (in order of importance) up to 10 education and job training agencies to which you have referred Job Connection clients most frequently during the past 12 months. List the agency and the type(s) of programs or services utilized (e.g., basic skills instruction, vocational training).

Agency	Type of Program/Service

2. Please check the types of information that you use to determine a Job Connection client's satisfactory progress in an education or training program. Also, please describe the level of performance or indicators of behavioral or attitudinal change that you use in determining whether a client's progress is satisfactory (e.g., specific gain in score; rate of attendance; types of behavioral indicators).

Information Type		Indicator of Satisfactory Progress
Check if Used	Measures of Skill Gain	
_____	CAPP Score	_____
_____	TABE Score	_____
_____	ABLE Score	_____
_____	Attainment of GED/high school diploma	_____
_____	Other (Please specify)	_____
	Other Education Measures	
_____	Class grade/Grade point average	_____
_____	Teacher's written assessment	_____
_____	Teacher's verbal assessment	_____
_____	Program certificate	_____
	Other Measures	
_____	Attendance	_____
_____	Measures of job skill attainment (please specify)	_____
		_____
_____	Indicators of client's change in behavior (e.g., interaction with family and children, job-keeping behaviors -- please specify)	_____
		_____
_____	Indicators of client's change in attitude (e.g., attitudes about education and work -- please specify)	_____
		_____
_____	Information reported by client (please specify)	_____
		_____
_____	Other (please specify)	_____

3. In addition to the types of information listed in question 2, are there other data that you would like to collect about a client's satisfactory progress? Yes _____ No _____
If yes, please describe.

_____

_____

_____

_____

4. How do you obtain the information listed in Question 2 about a client's progress in an education or training program? Check all that apply:

_____ Administer assessment/test instruments myself

_____ Obtain written information from education and training providers by mail

_____ Obtain written information from education and training providers through discussions and/or meetings

_____ Obtain verbal information from education and training providers

_____ Obtain verbal information from client

_____ Other (please specify) _____

_____

_____

5A. Please check the difficulties that you have encountered in attempting to obtain information from service providers about clients' satisfactory progress in Job Connection. Check all that apply.

_____ Basic skills test results/information about other education measures are not available in a form that can be interpreted

_____ Basic skills test results/information about other education measures are not available in the required time frame

_____ Attendance information is not available in the required time frame

_____ Measures of job skill attainment are not available in a form that can be interpreted

_____ Other (please describe)

_____

_____

5B. Please describe the two difficulties that have been the most problematic and why.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

6A. Please check the factors that have facilitated the collection of information from service providers about clients' satisfactory progress. Check all that apply.

_____ The availability of test, attendance, and/or other information in a written form

_____ The geographical location of the service provider

_____ Your personal relationship with staff at the service provider

_____ Other (please specify)

_____

_____

6B. Please describe the two factors that have been the most helpful and why.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

7. Please check the types of information you use to identify and select education, skill, and job training programs for Job Connection clients. Check all that apply.

_____ Rate of job placement

_____ Types of skill training offered by program

_____ Geographical location

_____ Personal experience/prior knowledge of provider

_____ Information from other clients who attended the program

_____ Length of program

_____ Recruitment by provider

_____ Default rates for student loans

_____ Client's preference of service

_____ Drop out rates

_____ Availability of support services

_____ Relationship between area of skill training and labor market

_____ Cost of program

_____ Other (please specify)

_____

_____

_____

8. Please describe the difficulties that you have encountered in determining the quality of education, skill, and/or job training programs.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

9. In order to help you in referring clients to programs, what information about the quality of education, skill, and job training programs would you like to have access to, that currently is not available?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Thank you for your cooperation in completing this survey.
Please return the survey in the enclosed envelope to:

Judith Alamprese
COSMOS Corporation
1735 Eye Street, N.W., Suite 613
Washington, D.C. 20006

Appendix B

LIST OF DIM DISTRICT EDUCATION AND
JOB TRAINING AGENCY PROVIDERS

DIM DISTRICT
LIST OF EDUCATION AND JOB TRAINING AGENCY PROVIDERS

AGENCY	TYPE OF PROGRAM/SERVICE
DISTRICT: Hartford	
Adult Education	
Literacy Volunteers	Basic education, remedial education, ESL
Urban League of Greater Hartford	Remedial education, basic skills, ESL, GED
VIDA at GHCC	GED, ESL, Pre-college
A.I. Prince Vocational School	High school diplomas
Hartford Board of Education	ABE, GED, ESL
Area High Schools	Completion of diploma--teen parents
Hartford Adult School	Remedial Education, ESL, basic skills instruction, GED
Data Institute	ESL, ABE, GED
National Puerto Rican Forum	Clerical and remedial, basic skill instruction GED
Camenemos	GED, ESL, remedial education, basic skill instruction
Capitol Region Education Council (CREC)	GED, ESL

Higher Education

Hartford State Technical School	Associate degree programs
Greater Hartford Community College	Associate degree programs
Manchester Community College	Associate degree programs
Asnuntuck Community College	Associate degree programs

Occupational/Vocational Skills

Hartford State Technical School	Skill training
Data Institute	Clerical
A.I. Prince Vocational School	Vocational skills (e.g., dental hygienist, LPN)
National Puerto Rican Forum	Vocational skill training
Hartford Area Training Center	Non-traditional occupations, vocational training
Church Academy	Clerical Training
Women in Trades	Non-traditional occupations
Economic Research Development Agency (ERDA)	Vocational skill training
Greater Hartford Community College	Professional skills
Manchester Community College	Professional skills
Asnuntuck Community College	Certification

Job Search/Vocational Exploration

America Works	Employment Services
Economic Research Development Agency	Testing and references

On-the-Job Training

America Works of Connecticut	On-the-job training

DISTRICT: New Haven

Adult Education

Latino Youth	ESL, GED
Regional Council on Education and Employment	College prep, basic skills
Centro San Jose	ESL
New Haven Adult Education	GED prep, resource lab and basic skills, certified nurse's aid, diploma programs, parenting skills, adult education classes

Higher Education

South Central Community College	Business Administration, word and data processing; dietetic technician; drug and alcohol rehabilitation counselor; culinary arts, gerontology option, executive secretary, and radiology; college career training

Occupational/Vocational Skills

Opportunities Industrialization Center	Office skills, GED preparation
Career Ladder (New Haven Public Schools Adult Education)	Clerical training
Valley Job Training (Shelton Adult Education)	CNA, clerical programs, job placement
Community Action Agency	Computer-related training
Department of Rehabilitation Services	Testing, training, support services
Regional Council on Education and Employment	Word processing
Private Industry Council (PIC)	Training--mostly CNA and operation independence
Eli Whitney	CNA, LPN, dental assistant, surgical technician
Platt Technical School	Medical assistant
College	Registered nurse training
Greater New Haven State Tech College	Data processing, electrical
Department of Employment Services	Vocational exploration and employment services

Job Search/Vocational Exploration

Private Industry Council (PIC)	Job search

DISTRICT: Bridgeport

Adult Education

Bridgeport Jobs	GED
Committee on Training and Employment	GED, basic skills
Greenwich Adult Education	GED, basic skills, ESL
Stamford Adult and Continuing Education	GED, basic skills, ESL
State Technical School	ESL, GED
Literacy Volunteers	Literacy program--ESL, basic English reading
New Milford Adult Education	GED
Stratford Adult Education	Adult education, basic education, high school completion, GED, ESL
La Opportunidad	Hispanic Outreach program--motivational, self-esteem, life skills, some remedial classes
J.M. Wright Regional Vocational Technical School	ESL, GED
Bridgeport Adult Education	ESL, GED, ABE, H.S. completion, literacy
Bullard Havens Vocational Tech School	ESL, Spanish GED, ABE

Mercy Learning Center	Literacy program, low-level remedial education for GED, ABE, life skills
Danbury Adult Education	GED, ESL, ABE, and H.S. diploma
Ben Franklin Center (Franklin School)	ESL, GED, ABE, and literacy
Higher Education	
Community College	Associate degree (AA, AS, pre RN)
Southern Connecticut State University	BA, BS
Mattatuck Community College	Associate degree programs
Norwalk Community College	Associate degree programs
Occupational/Vocational Skills	
Norwalk Community College	Nurse's aid
Committee on Training and Employment	ESL, vocational training
Training Connection	Clerical training
Norwalk Economic Opportunity Now, Inc. (NEON)	Word processing, clerical training
J.M. Wright Regional Vocational Technical School	Vocational training
Urban League	Clerical skill training

Regional Vocational Tech School	Nurse's aid training
Mattatuck Community College	Nurse's aid
Bridgeport Jobs	Skill train, (office skills, word processing and job readiness program)
Central H.S. Adult Education	Skill training
Bullard Havens Vocational Tech School	Skill training
Danbury Adult Education	Vocational training
Greater Bridgeport Labor Council	Nurse's aid training
Community College	Certificate
Norwalk Technical School	Nurse's Aid training, vocational training
Goodwill Industry	Skill training
Job Search/Vocational Exploration	
Training Connection	Job placement
University of Bridgeport	Teacher certification, paralegal studies
Bridgeport Jobs	Job referrals (OJT placement), unsubsidized employment
Support Services	
YWCA	Support services
Connecticut Talent Assistance Cooperative	Support services

DISTRICT: Norwich

Adult Education

Centro de la Communidad Inc.	ESL, basic skills
New London Adult Education	Basic skills, GED, ESL, high school diploma, testing services, ABE
Quinebaug Valley Community College	ESL

Higher Education

Thames Valley State Technical College	Associate degree programs
Mohegan Community College	Associate degree programs
Manchester Community College	Associate degree programs
Eastern Connecticut State University	Bachelor degree programs

Occupational/Vocational Skills

Huntington Institute	Career training
Ridley Lowell School of Business	Business career training
Centro de la Communidad Inc.	CNA training
Thames Valley State Technical College	Vocational training, certificate
Mohegan Community College	Certificate, vocational training

Quinebaug Valley Community College	Secretarial
Norwich Regional Vocational School	Post graduate vocational skill
Opportunities Industrialization Center	Clerical vocational skill, JTPA vocational training, GED, pre-vocational training, word processing
Job Search/Vocational Exploration	
Women's Consortium	Displaced homemakers career counseling, vocational testing and counseling, workshops and referrals to other programs
Support Services	
Department of Rehabilitation Services	Support Services
DISTRICT: Middletown	
Adult Education	
YWCA	Displaced homemakers services, ESL, Spanish and English skills
Casa Boricua	ESL, GED
E.C. Goodwin Technical	Basic skills
Learning Works (New Britain)	GED, adult remediation, ESL and basic skills
Meriden Adult Basic Education	ESL, GED
Middletown Adult Education	GED, ABE, ESL, high school diploma

Higher Education

Central Connecticut State University	Degree program
Tunxis Community College	Associate degree programs
South Central Community College	Associate degree programs
Middlesex Community College	Associate degree programs
Manchester Community College	Associate degree programs

Occupational/Vocational Skills

Salter School	Vocational training
Greater Hartford Community College	Certificate degree programs
E.C. Goodwin Technical	Vocational training
Tunxis Community College	Certificate programs
Vinal Tech	LPN/CNA program
Eli Whitney	LPN, CNA
Ona Wilcox School of Nursing	RN program
Casa Boricua	CNA training
America Works	Clerical training and work ethics program
Kuhn Training Center	CNA program

DISTRICT: Waterbury

Adult Education

Data Institute	Basic skills
Multi-Skill Educational Training Center (METC)	Basic skills
Waterbury Adult Education	Remedial education, ESL, high school diploma, basic skills

Higher Education

Tunxis Community College	Associate degree programs
Mattatuck Community College	Associate degree programs
Waterbury State Technical College	Associate degree programs
Northwestern Community College	Associate degree programs

Occupational/Vocational Skills

Data Institute	Vocational training
Mattatuck Community College	Certificate programs
Waterbury State Technical College	Certificate programs
Kaynor Technical High School	Certified nurse's aid (vocational training)
Multi-Skill Educational Training Center (METC)	Vocational training